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# MY SOUTH AFRICAN YEAR

*WORKS BY SAME AUTHOR*

FRANCE AND THE FRENCH
MAKERS OF NEW FRANCE
JOFFRE AND HIS ARMY
FRANCE AT BAY

J. C. Smuts.

D269m

# MY SOUTH AFRICAN YEAR

BY

CHARLES DAWBARN

WITH THIRTY ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS

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DEDICATED TO

MRS. GEORGE PAYNE

OF DURBAN, NATAL

"THE MOTHER OF THE SOLDIERS"

# SOUTH AFRICA

O not by Earth's trim garden-lands may
Africa be slighted,
*Her* roses are a thousand hills by the
Dawn rapture lighted!
Her violets are the purple plains
Where twilight reigns,
Soon to carnations changed, and after
To marigolds who meet the Sun and laugh
In leagues of golden laughter!

VINE HALL.

# PREFACE

"SO much to do, so little done." This saying of the dying Rhodes in his little cottage by the sea at Muizenberg, applies to me, in this book. To compass so great a subject demands, at least, much courage. Yet, being conscious of inadequacy, I have this to comfort me, that if I fail I have done so in the best service in the world. To him who loveth much, much is forgiven, and in this spirit I commend my work to those whose work it is to judge.

The faults I find and the holes I pick must be set down to an affectionate use of my time, and a desire to paint the scene as it is—the shadows as well as the high lights.

If I were asked to sum up South Africa in the terms of my experience, I should recount . . . At an "old boys'" dance at Durban, chauffeur and mistress met, and neither was confounded. Politically, I might repeat the story heard in Pretoria Club. A certain local judge was discussing with Mr. Chamberlain the latter's cool reception in South Africa after the war. Said the Colonial Secretary, aggrieved: "We have given back the watch." "Yes," said the other, "but you have kept the chain!" If now we seem to be hastening to restore the chain . . . but that is anticipating the event and the book. Besides, there is Smuts to keep an eye on the Imperial goods.

"This is a wonderful country," said the General to me, " not like Canada and Australia, purely white men's countries—but one where the black man does the manual labour and the settler directs it." This is the very essence of economic Africa.

Finally, a little fact illustrates the informality of the land. Mr. G. H. Wilson, the acting editor of the *Cape Times*, wanted to see General Smuts, but he was in one train and the Premier in another. The trains crossed, and the journalist, not to be outdone, " flagged" the engine as it approached. The train stopped. " Hallo, Wilson, is that you ? " exclaimed the great man as he saw his pursuer enter his coach. It was the most natural thing in the world that a Pressman should stop a Premier's train—in South Africa.

Thanks are due for courtesy and consideration to Earl Buxton, the late Governor-General and now head of the Commission to fix the future of Rhodesia ; to Sir Drummond Chaplin, Administrator of that region ; to General Smuts, himself, for much kindness ; to Sir Howard Gorges, the late ruler of South-West Africa, and to Sir William Hoy, General Manager of Union Railways. To leading statesmen I owe a sheaf of thanks, notably to Sir Thomas Smartt, and to Minister J. W. Jagger. I thank them all.

Of Durban I shall ever cherish the fondest memories, if only for the dear friends, whose hospitality I sought and found for many weeks. The charming chatelaine of " Overdale," to whom this book is inscribed, must take it as guerdon for a heavy debt. The shadow that fell when we were there, blotting out the sun and stars, was only made supportable by the sweet sympathy of our kith and kin in this far-away South African port.

Nor can I forget the dear enthusiasm and pervasive eloquence of my good friend, Dr. C. T. Loram, former Head of Native Education in Natal, and now one of the three Commissioners under the new Act.

For the granting of rights of reproduction, I must acknowledge the courtesy of Sir T. J. Bennett, C.I.E., M.P., proprietor of *The Times of India*, and of the editors of *The Contemporary Review* and the *World's Work*, respectively, in regard to the chapters on the Indian in Natal, on Earl Buxton and Farming in South Africa.

Finally, I must thank Mrs. Jessie Rogers (of Durban) and Miss Mitchell (of Fleet Street) for much inspired reading of rough notes penned in the halt of trains, in motor journeys across the Continent, in the antechambers of politicians. For the personal photographs in this work I am indebted to my wife, to Miss Kathleen Payne, to the Misses Sheldon, of Nairobi, to Miss Fiddes-Wilson and to Major Fitzroy, A.D.C. to the late Governor-General.

I could extend the list indefinitely, just to show how many have been good to me in Africa. But the curtain is going up ; I must hurry to my place on the O.P. side.

BAYSWATER, C. D.
*Midsummer*, 1921.

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# INTRODUCTION

"HOW do you like South Africa ?" This is the question they propound to me in the land of my book. It is the touchstone of the tourist whereby he is judged infallibly. He will stand or fall in estimation just as he satisfies the test. But I proffer, naturally, this question to my readers : "How do you like 'My South Africa'"? At least I have tried therein to speak the truth that is in me—a courageous, if unprofitable, enterprise. But, habit is strong—and I have that inability so touchingly expressed by the Somali guide, who came to me at Zanzibar, saying, "My name George Washington, me tell no lie." . . . On the other hand, there is nothing to conceal. Frankly, I *do* like South Africa, and have done my best to say so. I wish the cost of print and paper were less excessive, whereby I could say it to greater length. (And this without consulting my readers, of course).

To tell all the reasons why I love South Africa would take too long, but I may touch upon a few. The romantic youth who makes a sonnet to his lady's eyebrow suffers from my complaint. Neither of us can conceal his affliction. I think every stranger who has the temperament to feel and the eye to see must be impressed with the country. It is so strange, so unlike anything one has met before—so full of unpremeditated charm, of unrehearsed effects. Even the climate has a way with it that you do not expect—a sort of absent-minded violence that breaks out with disconcerting suddenness. For variety of temperature, South Africa has beaten England hopelessly. There is no meteorological phase in the old country to compare with the sensation of being frost-bitten in the morning and over-heated at noon. It is the land of surprises, of rapid transformations. And it is the unexpected that charms us in daily life. Africa is always tempting us, always beckoning us on into the unknown where astounding adventure may await us. Even the black man is a surprise. He keeps us guessing. The utter democracy of the sub-continent is as startling as its thunderstorms, which split the sky and show, in one terrifying flash all the jagged beauty of the mountains. Democracy, also—of the Colonial sort—lays bare a man's soul. The millionaire disguises himself out of respect for the poor. His ancestry will not let him " swank." He is of good Puritan stock, and thinks outward show a sin. His plain-looking motor-car gives no inkling of his wealth. " Appearances are deceptive " —a lack of them even more so. And existence is truer and sweeter for this quietude of life, this strict attention to business, this disdain of display, which is the stamp of the Colonial Britisher. The just man makes a fortune. That is the deep belief of strenuous simplicity. Thus, the fathers of America held that failure meant feebleness in morals, and South Africa rather thinks it may be true.

Africa is dear to me because it is the land of perpetual surprise, the land of vivid contrasts, the land where you are sure something is going to happen. And, generally, it does.

" What population do you think the country could hold ? " is another of these searching tests that people unfeelingly apply to the unhappy author. Those who have had far more opportunities of judging than I, declare that at least ten millions could be housed in these wide stretching steppes. But it is without doubt useless to dump a man down on the veld and say, " Here is your farm, now work it," when there's nothing to work except the rough, uncleared ground and not a building in sight. That, however, is rather the airy British way. You must give the man some assurance that he will make a living by his industry—not merely tell him to get on and work without showing him how to get on and how to work. In that sense, of course, South Africa is backward and inhospitable, with the inhospitality of politics. For politics, as I show farther on, close the doors against the new man and his ideas. We want the door opened with plenty of fresh air coming in laden with new ideas. The poor man cannot live in South Africa because he must not do " kaffir's work." That is beneath his dignity and would upset all our notions of racial superiority. Whatever we say about the dignity of labour for the good of the black man's soul, we must admit that we ourselves are loth to try it under the melting sun. And finally, the negro works so much better than we can in his own land. This is essentially a country for the supervisor class. Whether he will or not, the immigrant becomes an aristocrat. He cannot stoop to delve in the red soil : that is not only against the conventions, but against his capacities.

The only remedy for paucity of people is irrigation ; such well-considered schemes that large areas of semi-desert are brought under the plough. That is the remedy for the drought which makes continuous inroads, so that large parts of the country are drying up. It is also a remedy for crowded Europe, for its surplus population can go out into the wilds and make two blades of grass grow where none grew before. But for such enterprise not only capital and skill are required, but likewise the right kind of mental poise. I know men and women who would perish five miles from a cinema. That is not the kind that would flourish in the solitudes.

When I saw General Smuts at Pretoria a few weeks after my arrival in South Africa, he said " Keep your mind a sensitive plate. Do not form opinions until you have seen what this country has to show you."

I have tried to follow this advice: to keep the mind supple and plastic, to receive impressions, to learn from conversations, to study "problems" at close range and study life in its different aspects in this fascinating clime. Few, I dare say, have travelled as much as I in search of material for a book. I hope my readers will not think it is pains to poor purpose. In any case I have "displaced myself," many thousands of miles, that I might look into the heart of things in Rhodesia, take the German temperature in South-West Africa, learn the grievances of the Boers up and down the Union and understand, as well as I could, the underlying as well as the apparent currents running in the great centres of Cape Town, of Johannesburg, Kimberley, Durban, Salisbury and Bulawayo, as well as the humble and far-distant "dorp."

I hope I have not neglected the picturesque. No country could be more beautiful in the grandeur of its wildness, in the expanse of its quivering prairies, in the flower-bedecked beauty of Table Mountain, and its glimpses of the sea; in the sylvan glories of the Knysna; the melancholy grandeur of the Matoppos, the unapproachable splendour of Victoria Falls, the haunting mystery and wonder of the Zimbabwe Ruins.

Leaning over her tea-table at Pretoria, a charming lady questioned, "Are you really writing about us, after so short a while?" Between mouthfuls of delectable bread and butter, I confessed I was. It seemed to shock her greatly—what temerity!—after one year. I admit it. A year is short measure for a volume—*currente calamo*—on the endless variety of South Africa. I have no hope of having done justice to my subject. I must content myself with having rendered homage to its infinite charm.

If I have given here the semblance of the things seen and felt and heard in the way of travel, then my efforts are not wholly vain. To set down what one has seen, is not, according to Ruskin, the meanest work in the world.

I should apologize for the solemn note that pervades some chapters of this book. And yet in dealing with such questions as " Boer and Briton " and " Black and White," it is worse than foolish to take a flippant view. The negro has long outlived the " blasted nigger " stage. If he has not yet reached the dignity of " a gentleman of colour," he is, at least, a man insistent, if you only knew it, upon his rights. Imagination must lend us eyes to see the movement of his lips, and ears to hear the fluttered beating of his heart. I have tried to tell what he feels about his own progress and situation *vis-à-vis* to ourselves. He has both reason and unreason in his grievance. He does not appreciate how much the whites have paid for their progress, for their privilege of being " superior." He recks not the centuries spent in harsh and grinding effort to raise the worker of our race to his present " place in the sun." The black inhabitant of South Africa would seize at once the heritage of those who have gained it by their incessant struggles and unbending wills. The negro has not struggled ; his " character " is weak. And he does not know it. That is the tragi-comedy of his case, yet he has sensibility and a capacity to rise that few suspect, perhaps. The distance between him and his masters is lessening daily. They must bend and take him by the hand. The fact that Prince Arthur of Connaught has shown consideration to the native means much to him who has received it.

But I would not have you suppose that all is bright and beautiful, flawlessly perfect, in South Africa. It would be grievously monotonous if it were so. Even goodness needs a few defects to make it human. Like all young communities, South Africa suffers for want of graces of the mind, which enable a man to divine what he cannot see and what he cannot touch with physical hands. In the sturdy Colonial type, which I find so excellent and durable, is some lack of imagination, of that nice appreciation of the other man's position which is so precious in the mortal called to govern a subject people. Problems in a new country are apt to be too real, daily tasks too imperative, time too short to indulge in day-dreaming and in that sort of inspired reflection which is the seed-bed of the arts. It is not sufficient to have beautiful sunsets to produce a race of poets. You must have leisure to contemplate the scene, the mind to read into it its spiritual beauties, and to grasp its hidden significance. Mere squatting on the veld, with the sunset to keep you company, is not sufficient to inspire a poem ; there must be the poetic impulse stirred by daily contact with similarly refined souls. There must be the promptings of a brain warmed and purified, strengthened and ennobled by what is beautiful in nature, in literature and the arts.

South Africans have everything but this one element. They have a spacious and promising country so fruitful that one has only to scratch the soil and Nature responds with a smile. They have a plenitude of labour which, rightly handled and utilized, will lead them to great prosperity. They have magnificent coalfields so easy of access and so productive that the working-costs are far smaller than they are in Britain. They have diamonds ; they have gold in such quantities that it supplies the world—and the country with a handsome revenue. They have forests of wattle suitable for tanning, great semi-deserts which can support multitudes of cattle and small stock, and great stretches of veld calling aloud for cultivation, for the enthusiasm and science of the farmer. Added to that is a climate which, with all the drawbacks of sudden waterspouts and extremes of heat and cold, is still conducive to an open, free and healthful existence. Considered fiscally, South Africa is the country of the blest, calling to every endeavour with a real prospect of profitable return and, yet, lacking this one thing.

South Africa has peculiar problems calling for the most sensitive analysis, for the greatest subtleties of the psychologist. There is the native problem upon which I insist for many pages in this book; there is the Indian problem obsessing Natal, and there is the evergreen problem of the Dutch and British. Each requires insight, the nicest sense of justice, of good faith between man and man, the loftiest sentiment of duty towards one's fellow-being. And there is need for loving comprehension as well as for that austere armour of the soul which forces a man to offer "the square deal" in every circumstance, even the most adverse or offering easy opportunities for over-reaching. Black and brown South Africa want the square deal—just as they, on their part, must understand the white man's difficulties. Water is needed, men and money are needed, wisdom is needed, and there is much of it in the policy of the Prime Minister. But, above all, is needed that divine understanding of peoples, that vivifying touch that puts nation into line with nation, and forbids injustice in the name of the injunction: "Love thy neighbour as thyself."

# MY SOUTH AFRICAN YEAR

## I

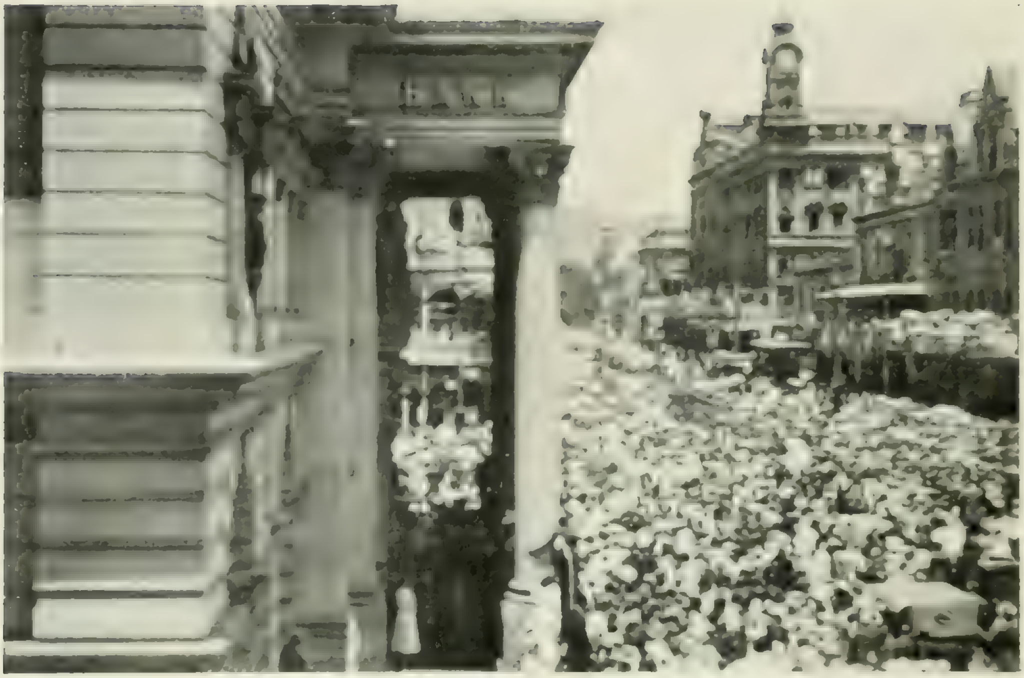
## TWO CAPITALS

HOW many poets have sung of Cape Town I do not know; but numerous persons of distinction have penned certificates to its character. It is worth them all. Some, in a desire to praise, have compared it with Naples, with other beauty spots on earth. But to me it is all unnecessary. It is just Cape Town, and that suffices. Yes, Cape Town can stand alone in the majesty of its beauty, true queen of southern seas. If you should enter the ocean gate when the sky is clear and the breeze propitious, softly blowing aside the veils which shroud the summit as if it were the tiring room of a goddess desiring not the gaze of mortals, you will be fortunate—more fortunate than I. A cold wind blew direct from the chilly heights, and I was glad to draw the coat closer as the ship approached the shore and made fast. And first contact with Cape Town, and the more than Dutch deliberation of officials, had a touch of coldness in the manner of it, like the shrewish, impish wind. . . . But, there, formalities are ended, and we have leave to go. There is something garish in this night scene, I'll admit—something puzzling in the types presented. "Which is the dominant race?" Frankly, I do not know. Here are a hundred races mixed. The crowd is like an ethnological chart quickly unrolled.

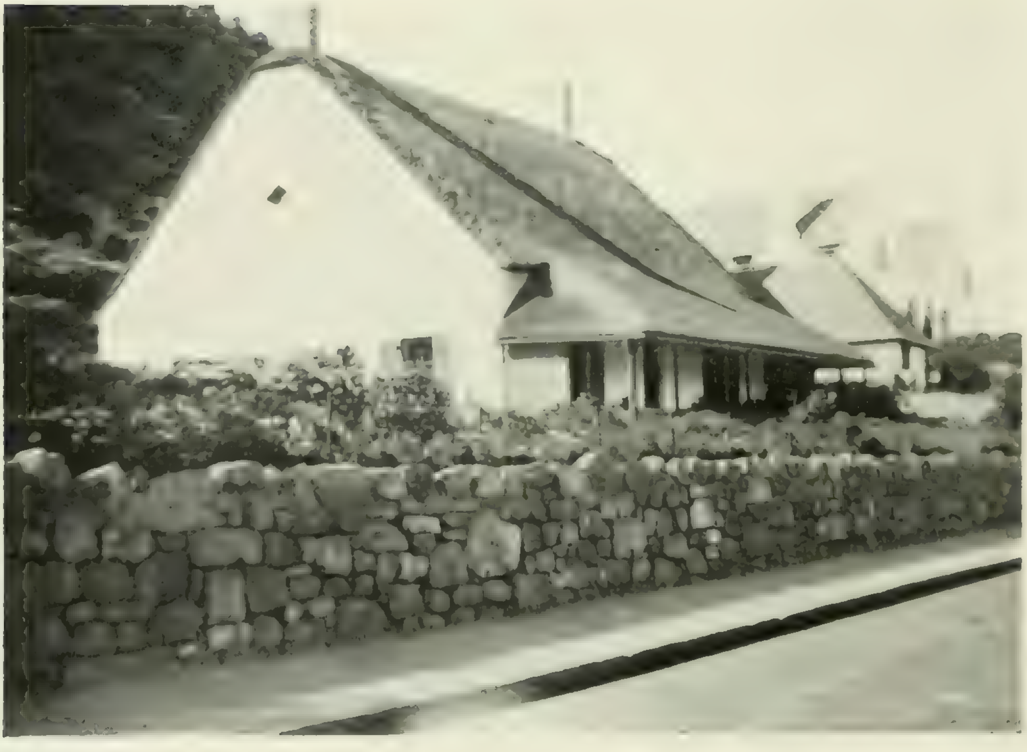
But on the morrow far up on the mountain-side, with the gaze seaward, what compensation for all the *longuers* of the voyage! What magnificence in the sweeping curves of the Bay, with Cape Town and its suburbs stretching outwards to the far horns. This is the noble panorama, but the scene in detail recalls ancient Greece—world-renowned spots which have impressed themselves upon the mind in clean and clear-cut beauty: solitary pines sentinelling a ridge and, round about, the frame of mountain, sea and peerless sky. The town itself is a "concentrate" of life, vivid and picturesque. You see it to the full in the arcades of Adderley Street (named after him who resisted the plan for dumping convicts at the Cape). It runs from the docks right into the mountain. On the way, in the Gardens, it encounters the figure of Rhodes, pointing to the north: "Your frontier is there," he says. This garden is a joy, with its wondrous admixture of trees: its pergolas and lovers' seats, its drooping air of mystery and charm. There are many points of interest in the town. One I find peculiarly seductive is the museum, where are admirable collections of animals, of mineral specimens, of some ancient monsters found in the subsoil of South Africa, and some astounding Bushman paintings. Then there is a Dutch house or two in old quarters recalling spacious times of long ago, for we are in the Mother City of South Africa.

Cape Town is extraordinarily rich in colour, and expresses, in dancing notes, just the pure joy of being that is in her bones. Here you get a cosmopolitan feeling that you do not get elsewhere. The city is more directly in touch with the world than any of the other towns. Her docks hold ships that are constantly upon the seas, bearing merchandise to her markets, or carrying therefrom the rich fruits that ripen on her soil. She is a link with "home" as England is still called, out here, to the annoyance of the Dutch, who profess to find it an offence. There is an intellectual life, too, that is still foreign to other parts. The Civil Service Club is of the British type, suggesting leisure and cultured talk. At its tables you will hear discussions on literary and social subjects—not the price of "mealies" and the idiosyncrasies of the kaffir. Coteries lift up their heads in an atmosphere not wholly conducive to the Arts. And yet they flourish: music in the shape of wondrous concerts; painting that is inclining towards a school, and even sculpture that is gathering to itself the enduring qualities that go with stone and bronze. Be this as it may, the charm of Cape Town is unquestioned. It meets and subjugates you at every turn. At each corner is a vision of the East in the sight of Malays and their womenkind—veiled, according to the immemorial custom, and, above the veil, eyes peering out intent and curious—even equivocal—in their gaze upon the world. Their spouses may wear the bold and rugged look of pirates imparting an indescribable flavour of adventure to the common noonday street. Here is the deep expectancy of a Brangwyn sea-scene, a catching of the breath. Surely a vessel waits behind the bluff with bold, desperate men lying on their oars, attending an order to depart, bearing I know not what illicit treasure with them. Colours of the prism flaunt in the streets, for these women from the Pacific Islands like bright raiment which shows off their dark complexions to perfection, and gives great animation to their features. Fluttering yellows and reds and blues are everywhere, so that the air pulses with them. And, in addition to this exotic population, is a half-caste or "coloured" population—coloured always means half-caste in South Africa and never the pure native—which is extraordinarily numerous and gives an uneasy and, sometimes, an almost sinister aspect to the crowds. The mixing of the races is even more apparent in the side streets than in the broad avenues of commerce, where one rubs shoulders with one's own people at least as frequently as with the others. With a slight stretch of imagination one could be in Southern Europe. I got this impression, once again in Africa, at Lourenço Marques. This dark-visaged population with its vivacity and air of " abandon," its swarming life and pure joyous unconventionality, does of a truth recall Nice. The duskiness belongs, surely, to the Mediterranean. Even the smell seems to evoke memories of the queen of the midland dolorous sea. There is the sea, glittering, at the end of the street ; the mountain, to be sure, has drawn nearer, but the ways of life are so similar—the same air of improvisation, as if the sun could be relied on, the same sense of out-of-door, the same care-free enjoyment of the hour. The stucco house-fronts, the chrome yellow of the walls, the irregularity of the architecture, the careless gaiety that a constant sun seems to engender—these are typical of sun-kissed shores. The city is irradiated with a glorious light in which the objects stand in high relief. Its suggestion of perpetual fête is, of course, belied by the fact of solid business. But the bustling and time-keeping world is smothered up by the movements of a crowd of wayfarers surely not too strenuously disposed. Do they spend their time, one wonders, in those delightful little coves which indent this shore, in the suburban sea-resorts, where life seems one long dream of soft enjoyment ?—perhaps at Muizenberg, where is the most exciting surf-bathing out of Honolulu, though Israel has certainly poured forth her hosts. Perhaps the wine-farms are their destination : adorable as the Garden of the Blest. Nothing, I suppose, could speak more strongly of paradise to the human spirit than these delightful slopes upon which the grapes grow to perfection.

In the planting of these wine-farms the early Dutch settlers had the assistance of the Huguenots, who constituted the most important body yet sent to South



ADDERLEY STREET, CAPE TOWN, STANDING STILL IN MEMORY OF THE DEAD



COTTAGE WHERE RHODES DIED AT MUIZENBERG

Africa. Many were Gascons, familiar with vine-planting, and gave their science to raising grapes. Afterwards, they intermarried with the Dutch, and there is scarcely an old Dutch family which has not some French blood in its veins. The folly of the Sun-King in interdicting the Protestant religion has had an immense influence on the fortunes of South Africa, as on other parts of the more settled world. What artists were these old Dutch settlers! It is they who have beautified the Cape Peninsula by planting its avenues of oaks; it is they who have carried into Southern Africa the most exquisite old-world culture, represented by these superb Dutch homes. The Western Province is, indeed, the cradle of the Colony. It was here that the "best families" settled in those early days which succeeded the founding of Cape Town as a station for fuel and fresh vegetables. Trafalgar, of course, changed things, giving the English command of the Atlantic and Indian oceans. But this is not the place to discuss the beginnings of South Africa, save as they affect Cape Town. Yet it is evident that each change of regime did leave its impress upon the town, which was springing up on the shores of Table Bay.

Groote Schuur, now the official residence of the Prime Ministers of the Union, is the beautiful house which Rhodes had constructed for himself out of an early store-house intended for the Dutch Trading Company. It is full of interesting relics. The little cottage where he died at Muizenberg has, likewise, a pathetic interest. It is now lent as a holiday home to certain Rhodesians. How solemnly eloquent, too, is the memorial to the memory of Rhodes. Here is the very spirit evoked by classic times, the magnificently inspiring cult of the dead—the sacred groves in which the gods walk and talk. Up on the hill, high placed above the town, is this monument to the great son of Africa, led up to by a flight of steps guarded by lions. At the foot is Watts' mounted figure of Physical Energy—a casting of that which stands in Kensington Gardens. On the top of the stone steps is a bust of the great man. There are the trees: cypresses and firs, and then the close presence of the mountain and the sea. Could there be a more divine spot on earth, one so eminently fitting to recall the work of the patriot who, however mistaken in his methods, was so supremely right in his ideals? And here his spirit seems to abide, hovering over the city where so much of his energy was expended in advancing the cause of his countrymen. Upon these splendid slopes will be placed the University of Cape Town, for the ambition of the city is to become a seat of learning. How appropriate, too, that the site is linked with the name of Rhodes.

The Mountain in flower is surely one of the goodly sights of the world! Wonderful is the variety of blossom which grows along the precipitous sides of this great cliff dominating the town. The moment of its greatest beauty is in the South African spring—September and October—and the spectacle is such as to inspire the least susceptible. The Mountain is in festival. The solitudes are riven with Homeric laughter and the heady song. Vastly different is the darkling scene. I remember one Sunday evening. In the streets was a throng of passers-by, leisurely following their bent. There passes the Salvation Army with its scarlet jerseys, beating drums, and blaring brass. Upon the edge of the pavement watches a fringe of natives and of coloured folk. Up the street come veiled women. What a contrast in civilizations! West and East meet. The Mountain is in flame. The setting sun sends its yellow rays through the "cloth" upon the Table. It is like the rising of smoke from an altar set up in High Heaven for the greater glory of God. The stones seem to glow with sacrificial fire as the night descends, with the swiftness of these Southern latitudes, and the pale stars emerge. Now the Mountain wears a deep air of brooding over the city.

There is, of course, the political aspect, and that cannot be disregarded, for Parliament plays so great a part in the life of the city for at least six months in the year. The *Cape Times*, which upholds the banner of culture and of right dealing as between the two races, is full of the political impressions of the hour, recording Parliament and, incidentally, showing how insistent are the claims of one race upon the other. Nationalists attack and Unionists or South African Party reply with a bitterness that belongs to all racial conflicts. Those debates in Parliament are interesting to watch if only for the contrast they afford with the proceedings at Westminster. Here is the mace upon the table and, behind it, the bewigged clerks of the House, and the Speaker in all the glory of his prototype by the Thames. Here, as there, the Member who would address the House, must catch the Speaker's eye. There is much the same code of ceremonies in vogue. The Members, as they leave or enter the House, bow to the chair. Dutchmen, I take it, find a certain difficulty in adopting such a ritual; it is distasteful to them. Their backs are stiff; they incline them with difficulty, they tell you, rather proudly. But there it is: willingly or not, they follow the etiquette of the House. Their diction is not as polished as that of British parliamentarians, but this is not unconnected with the medium. That does not seem to be very musical, compounded, as is Afrikaans, of many different tongues. The Members who make an impression when they speak are men of considerable calibre. Elsewhere I deal particularly with the oratory of General Smuts, which is a thing apart. Generally, the speech is somewhat rude and hearty, partaking, as it seemed to me, of some old joust: much lusty smiting and hard knocks received.

Here in Cape Province the racial chasm has narrowed to a degree unknown in other parts of the country. Coloured folk travel by trams in trailers provided for the purpose ; in the trains there may be more than a touch of colour in your neighbour. Indeed, it is hard to say where colour begins and ends, since some of the most notable families owe something of their vitality to the admixture of blood. The pure native type is less visible than the Malay who is said to be Mongol in origin, to speak Dutch at home, to pray in Arabic in his Mosque, and to support the British end of things in politics. But between this man and the native is a big category of half-castes, which no man can number. No city in the world presents so great a variety of racial features. Each occupation, whether of the Portuguese, Dutch or British, has left its physical traces upon the population. The Portuguese have been completely absorbed. You may find to your astonishment someone completely black, yet owning a corrupted European name, and suggesting in his lineaments a European origin. He is a product of this racial amalgamation. The early invaders succumbed to the influence of the *milieu.* The Dutch, to their honour, resisted more effectually, and kept their blood clean. Anglo-Dutch society, formed generally of British husbands and Dutch wives, is pleasant and cultivated. There is a great gulf fixed between these polished Dutch people, settled for a century or more in the fruitful and civilized Peninsula and the illiterate sons of the back veld. Society is agreeable and hospitable, and the temper of the people far less combative than that of the irreconcilables of the Transvaal and Free State.

One feels the difference on entering Pretoria. At once the air is sharper, the political note more strident. It is the fashion of these north-country Boers to fight, to defend harshly and savagely, it may be, their rights and immemorial customs and ways of life, whereas, as I have said, the Cape Dutchman is a pleasanter fellow.

He will not fight; the other will. That is the difference. On alighting at the station you get the sensation of arriving at a Dutch dorp. In fact you seem to be witnessing the hurry of a town to divest itself of the humble homespun of its earlier days to get into an official frock-coat. This old provincial air is still maintained in the wide-spaced streets, broad enough for a span of sixteen oxen to turn in, which is the reason for the width of village streets in Dutch South Africa. Many of the buildings of this earlier period are single-storied and primitive in appearance. But, as you proceed, you become aware of official pretension. Then you remember that for six months in the year it is the residence of the Governor-General, of the Ministers of State and heads of Departments. This assemblage of official personages gives Pretoria an influence out of all proportion to its size. It is not nearly as large as Cape Town or Johannesburg, and yet is the equal of the Southern Capital in political authority. Yet, as I show later, some virtue has gone out of Pretoria and entered into Cape Town. None the less, Pretoria must retain its significance if only that Rhodesia may join the Union. But it is a singular example of political rivalries that the Government and all its suite should oscillate between the one pole and the other, staying alternatively half the year in Pretoria and the other half at Cape Town. Pretoria lived strenuous hours when the fate of the Republics was in the balance and when Kruger sat even longer than was his wont upon the stoep cogitating—and expectorating—over the destinies of his country. It was on that selfsame stoep that he contemplated the *coup* which meant transporting from the country a vast treasure. Whatever the exact figure, down it went into the sea off the coast of Zululand. Ill-fated like the dictator who sent it forth, the *Dorothy* foundered, and lies, it is said, deeply embedded in the ocean bed. Omen, indeed, of the submergence of the old Boer's reign!

Pretoria is modern enough to-day, and is throwing off all the old provincial spirit. On its borders are found quantities of iron and coal. It threatens to become the Middlesbrough of the Northern Union. Steel works are established and the first blast furnaces in the country. The industry is financed by the local banks, and promises success. And then in the neighbourhood you have the Premier Diamond Mine, a State concern representing the largest open-workings of the sort in the world. It was here that the famous Cullinan Diamond was found, weighing one and three-quarter pounds. It now forms part of the Crown Jewels of England. Pretoria West, as the Parliamentary seat which returns General Smuts, is of great political consequence these days. Near by is Irene, and the farm to which the General retires in the few moments left to him by a strenuous life. The agricultural prospects of the district are considerable—perhaps the best throughout the Union.

Pretoria is dowered with buildings of the official kind in consonance with its administrative importance. Frankly, I was disappointed at the first view of the palace, where beats the official heart of South Africa. The building is exquisite and sumptuous in its details, full of imaginative touches with pavilions, loggias, fountains and suggestions of the Mauresque; but, in the ensemble, it is unimpressive. Grandeur is wanting from the design. It does not command enough attention from the hill-side and, afar off, it has the air of barracks. Yet on a nearer approach one sees that the red tiles which crown it and which give it a certain domestic touch, are eminently adapted to the climate. But a greater effect of architectural fitness would have been secured, in my judgment, by the use of green slates. Nevertheless it is a striking building, richly original and worthy of the new country that erected it—a monument of no mean kind to Mr. Herbert Baker, its gifted architect. Even now, commodious as this huge building is, it is scarcely sufficient to house the staff which has to deal with the administrative business of the country. I look with reverence at the office where the Prime Minister sits and find there solid furniture and a picture or two, one of them representing Kruger receiving a deputation of Dopper Boers, dressed in their solemn suits of black. On another wall hangs a great ship about to be launched, its prow looming large and formidable. There is something in its notion of strength that appeals to General Smuts, who says simply : " I like that."

Politically, the atmosphere is more stimulating than at Cape Town, which the Pretorian will unkindly refer to as " the dead end of things." Pretoria certainly rustles with life and even with intrigue. Nationalism has made great inroads even in the Government's staff. In any case, it is the home of the most forward and progressive section of the Nationalist Party. The leader of the Transvaal Republicans, Mr. Tielman Roos, is here. You will find many references to his activities in these pages, for it is he who bears the fiery cross of Separation. He is surrounded by young and ardent spirits like himself. You have the two tendencies in South Africa admirably expressed in Cape Town and Pretoria. The one is complacent and settled, possessing the contentment of a people who have grown used to the mild regime of Crown Government, all flower-bedecked and scented and coddled in comfort ; the other enshrining the fighting spirit. Pretoria is the heart of resistance. In the west end of Church Street is the simple single-storied building, with its coloured glass doors and wide verandah where Paul Kruger lived and had his official existence. The door is flanked by two lions, the gift of Barney Barnato, the diamond magnate, and everyone here recalls the grave shakings of head by the old Boers when Kruger accepted the present. The one lion is somnolent in its stony attitude, and the other fiercely alert. Nowadays, the old house is a maternity hospital, and the cry of the new-born infant is heard where formerly the leaders of the old Republic assembled to discuss, with portentous gravity, the troubled affairs of State. The feet of women ring over the stoep where Oom Paul sat by the hour together, a strange mixture of taciturnity and garrulity, of astuteness and sagacity and a stubborn, gnarled sort of ignorance and intolerance. The spirit of Kruger still broods in secret, but I like to think that the spirit of Botha and conciliation is more potent to-day.

Pretoria can be picturesque, also, as when the Prince-Governor saw it with the Jacarandas all in bloom. Their delicate mauve flowers form a filmy blue veil, looking from afar like incense in some vast temple in which the living trunks are pillars. And the town official who is responsible for planting these handsome trees is known, familiarly, throughout the Union as "Jacaranda Jim." It is a tribute worthy of his artistic inspiration.

## II

# MY CONCEPTION OF GENERAL SMUTS

THE personality of Smuts is a problem of extraordinary fascination, because upon his shoulders rests the responsibility for the government of South Africa. He is one of the most remarkable statesmen in the world. Both from the character of his experience and the diversified nature of his talents, he stands high up on the steps of fame overlooking masses of mediocrity. " Yes, he is a great man," acknowledge many, " but is he sincere ? " I am often asked whether the Premier is not too " slim " (in the jargon with which the Boer war familiarized us). Was he not known, at one time, as " Slim Jannie " ? these objectors insinuate. But you have only to look at his career to realize that no man has played a straighter game. Regard his connection with Botha. Everyone in South Africa admits that Smuts was the "Eminence grise" behind the charming personality of Botha. How easy to have stepped in front of his chief, to have supplanted him—or, at least, to have intrigued against him. But that was not Smuts' way. He did not intrigue against his chief, but used his intellectuality, his quickness of mind, and studious habits to the honour and glory of the older man. And when the time came for the curtain to drop on his old colleague, he was the first to render homage to his virtues and to his public services.

Smuts is big enough to have changed his mind in regard to us. Twenty years ago, he was one of our most formidable antagonists leading a commando against us. At one point he was nearly captured. The commando was surprised by the sudden eruption of the British, and many Boers lay dead. Smuts hid under a bush and, before the dawn, slipped silently away through the ring of unsuspecting khaki. In those days you would not have applied to him for an advertisement of the British Empire. Many changes have been wrought in his character and sentiments towards us since he wrote that singularly outspoken book *A Century of Wrong* just before the conclusion of the Boer war. It does not flatter us, and calls for a republic under the Dutch flag. But he realizes, now, that our worst blunders were nearly always the result of good intentions, of a sincere desire to do the right. Half the troubles which have arisen in Africa have been caused by following injudicious but well-meaning advice. This policy led to the Great Trek, and our tragic misunderstandings with the Boers. By some extraordinary ill fortune, South Africa was never able to present its case. There was no authorized voice. The Government was in touch with the missionaries, and scarcely ever with authorized lay opinion. In consequence, many misconceptions arose. There was constant bickering in those early days, and though we boggle at the words "a century of wrong," it was, certainly, "a century of blunderings," relieved, none the less, by signal acts of perspicacity, as when the Republics were given self-government again. Smuts survived all these blunders, as well as the calumnies of those who protested that he had gone over wholly to the British and was no longer worthy to speak for his countrymen. They, like ourselves, have learned to appreciate his deep strength of character, the sincerity of his nature, the breadth of his outlook.

Though he was brought up on a farm and lived his first youth entirely out of doors, he was rather a weedy and pale young man, probably because of the intensity of his studies. They occupied him continuously from the age of fourteen, when he went first to school until

GENERAL J. C. SMUTS, P.C., THE WEEK BEFORE THE SURRENDER OF PRETORIA TO LORD ROBERTS

CHIEF KULA WITH TWO CHIEF INDUNAS AT POMEROY, ZULULAND

he graduated from Cambridge with first-class honours in so remarkable a fashion that his year is known as "Smuts' year." But the Boer war and the hardships it involved, the open life he led on the veld, sleeping under the stars, put new life into him and gave him great robustness, so much so that he seems incapable of fatigue, to the surprise and envy of younger men. This was particularly noticeable during his two electoral campaigns, at the distance of about a year, in which he showed amazing resistance and ability to "carry on" an unlimited number of hours. I was struck with this in hearing him speak to his constituents at Pretoria. He seemed never to tire, and to continue by the hour. His hearers were like him; they were equally indefatigable and rushed from meeting to meeting, both inside and out, as if it were the great joy of their lives. "Hardy race, these Boers!" I reflected, "with a truly Scottish love of argument." A huge crowd listened to Smuts in the fine Church Square in Pretoria surrounded by handsome public buildings, one of which, the Law Courts, is said to have been paid for with the fines imposed on Jameson raiders. The general's oratorical manner is vastly interesting. It is extremely simple, direct, and without rhetorical flourishes. He says what he means in a way that none can mistake. His method is to repeat his points at least three times in slightly varying language so that they are fastened in everyone's memory. I marvelled, too, at the method of the discourse so different from an English orator's. He stood up in the centre of the square on an elevated platform, much as if Mr. Lloyd George were lecturing Londoners from the plinth of Nelson's Column, or President Harding had chosen Herald Square from which to address New Yorkers. His slim and graceful silhouette was outlined against the night; his bust thrown forward gave him a commanding look. He begins in English and concludes in Dutch. In English he seems to have a freer delivery than in his native tongue. The English is tinged with a slight accent, which is agreeable and even ingratiating. It seems that when he speaks in Dutch there is a more careful search of phrase.

"Do not get up against the British Empire," he counsels. "I know how useless that is because I have tried." (There is hearty laughter at this.) "This is a constitutional issue raised by our opponents. It is not business; it is disturbing. It is not good for us to be troubled with such questions on the verge of an era which promises unexampled prosperity to this country. You have not suffered from the War as Europe has—that is the plain truth of it. Of course, prices have gone up, but you have always had enough to eat; there has been no shortage. With the exception of the United States, no country in the world enjoys the credit that South Africa enjoys. But let us get on with the development of the country. Let us not deal with high politics; let us leave them alone. What we want is a strong, united South Africa—not one torn with dissensions, not one divided into two camps, one warring against the other, one reproaching the other for having broken faith, for having disregarded an agreement which was to be a pact of peace between the two white dominant races." In this strain he talks: practical, to the point, straight from the shoulder, words barbed with common sense—no high falutin'. Here is no panegyric of the British Empire. The speaker does not tell his hearers of Dutch and British descent how thankful they ought to be to live under the Union Jack. He does not say how glorious a thing it is to be a member of that Empire; how it represents grandeur and righteousness, moral prestige, justice and fair play—all the virtues we like to find in history and the opinions of "distinguished foreigners." How we know those foreigners! There is nothing of that in the Smuts' oratory—simply a blunt appeal to the business instincts of the people, to their pockets, to their interests as a progressive and keen-sighted folk. That is characteristic of the man : intensely realist, though a dreamer.

Courage speaks from his blue eyes and set face : courage and concentration. Seriousness is stamped upon it. There has never been a moment, probably, in his half-century of life when he felt frivolously inclined, though he has plenty of natural fun and a love of children and their simple joys. His rôle of husband and father at Irene, his farm close to Pretoria, is as sweet and harmonious as the ordering of his public life. And yet there is a great power of suppression in the face and eyes. Here is a man who can keep confidences and refuse to tell them even if tempted by untold advantage. " He looks straight at you—and says nothing at all. What is there behind that inscrutable forehead ?—how I would like to know ! " So says a friend, who has had many opportunities of meeting Smuts and of studying his unusual character. What there is of strength in it has come not so much from the hustings, from the battle-field or from the market-place as from the solitude of mountains, from " a day off " in the wilds. Like Rhodes, from whom he is so utterly different, he gets his spiritual inspiration from loneliness. He goes into the hills to think, to muse on the problems that confront him.

He has shown his sincerity in a hundred ways, not the least by sacrificing his own career at the Bar for the comparative pittance of a Minister. His remarkable abilities have been devoted to the State, and he is the last to regret it. He is certainly supported in this by Mrs. Smuts, who is a woman of considerable learning as well as the devoted mother of six children. Thus her character is the singular blend of the blue-stocking with true motherhood. As someone wrote of her, you could imagine her with a rolling-pin in one hand and a Greek lexicon in the other. She will not thank me for writing about her, for she loathes publicity, preferring infinitely the tranquil, unemotional life of the farm in the midst of her family and the details of the household. Yet she is a remarkable helpmeet to the Premier. They met as youth and maiden at Victoria College, Stellenbosch, where he and she were pursuing their studies with an equal brilliancy. When he carried off some prize, she was certain to cap it with another distinction. And yet she has been able to combine this love of letters with love of the home. She cares nothing for dress, for personal appearance : all these things are of no consequence to a woman gravely set on the perfection of human character and on the discharge of her immediate duties. Rarely or ever does she accompany her distinguished husband to Government House, for her joy is not in public appearances or receptions of any kind. Her friends asked her, on the return of the General from his Imperial labours in Europe : " Aren't you going to meet him at Cape Town ? " But she replied, with the superb tranquillity that is hers : " No, his home is here, and here I will wait for him." Thus spoke the woman more truly than if she had written a Latin thesis on domesticity. Notwithstanding her intellectuality she is no partisan of the woman's vote. On the telephone I asked her her opinion, and the instrument vibrated back : " Of course I am open to conviction, but at present I am not inclined to favour female suffrage. I think the mass of my countrywomen are not prepared for it." During the War, Mrs. Smuts was a tower of strength to our Cause. She left her retirement and flung herself with zeal into work for soldiers, and was harshly criticized by some of the extreme backvelders for having dressed one of her children in khaki. This was a great offence, and showed that she was not truly Dutch ! Mrs. Smuts laughed at such prejudice. But her services went much farther than that and her visits to hospitals and her efforts, generally, showed a noble enthusiasm for the principles for which the Allies fought. This was the more noticeable in that none was more bitterly hostile than she to British domination during the Boer war, in which she had the misfortune to lose a cherished and, then, only son from enteric in a Concentration Camp.

General Smuts has the defects of his qualities: a natural inclination towards "superiority" because he is superior, some impatience of pedestrian intellect because his own tendency is to mount Pegasus and ride away from stupidity. But stupidity has its vested interests, political and otherwise, not lightly to be set aside. Thus Smuts is always in danger from his own temperament, and must be saved, sometimes, from the political effects of petulance: the reaction of high nervous energy from overstrain. His conceptions are idealistic and, sometimes, too purely intellectual. There is a struggle, which close observers can detect behind the thoughtful brow, between the plain path of commonplace expediency and those subtleties of shade and definition in which delight the metaphysician and the artist. For Smuts is an artist, just as are Lloyd George and Aristide Briand. But he has advantage over both in his mental range, in the loftiness of his intellectual hobbies. Both would excel him in ability to draw the crowd, to interpret the thoughts and wishes of the plain man in the terms of vibrant oratory. He is not a "plain" man and does not, naturally, speak his tongue: he has acquired it only at the price of schooling himself to know and feel vicariously, to put himself into the skin of the unlettered, to divest himself of the scholar's gown. His intellectual joys take him upwards—not to the haunts of common men. From these spiritual exercises he returns chastened and purified. He has been transfigured. But there is the arena on the morrow, full of dust and dirt—no place for delicate souls!

He has not, I say, that patent appeal to his countrymen that belongs to the Wizard of Wales, and no less to the "Charmer of the Chamber," Monsieur le Président du Conseil. He is not a "charmer" in that sense. The multitude do not hang upon his lips. For them he is no prophet, and yet he can scale heights that would leave breathless, perhaps, politicians who are the darlings of the crowd. This spirit of detachment is a weakness as well as strength. It may so easily remove him from the common ken. It wants watching and controlling like any precious gift. Yet it is rarer than rubies—a jewel worn upon the breast. There is spiritual refreshment in letting the eye feast upon it—but, there is danger, too: the danger of abstraction. This analysis shows why I call Jan Christiaan Smuts a fascinating figure. He is, also, a baffling figure. Indeed, I might say that the last discovery of South Africa is the great man himself. Even his father, a plain sort of farmer, with no particular insight, I suspect, did not perceive the exceptional merit of his son. Nor were efforts made to give him early education. He ran wild, as we have seen, until the age of fourteen, and then his career at school startled his family by its brilliance. He is always a surprise, a mystery to people who watch him. "A secretive soul," they feel, but they are not always sure of the source of his inspiration. Is it malign or beneficent? I have heard some suggest a purpose to "get even with" the English, to sell us, finally, bound and gagged, to his own brethren! It is all moonshine; it bears no relation to the real Smuts; but, after all, it is not unnatural that some should suspect some tortuousness of mind—convolutions that lead not out into the plain light of day, but into the secret places of an anti-British plot. Is not his career filled with just such half-lights and twistings and turnings? Consider his action as a young man hurrying from Cambridge, which gave him a Double Law Tripos, to enter the service of Kruger & Leyds, and then to lead a commando against us under Piet Joubert and Louis Botha. Wonderful evolution: the obscure farmer's boy who becomes a power with the Boers after passing through that suspected place by the Cam—suspected, at all events, by Dutch dwellers "in the blue." Is not such learning sign of a complicated, perhaps an ungodly mind? And, then, more surprising transformation of any: he takes the field against his own Dutch and, wearing the uniform of a British general, in the army against whom he fought so long and bitterly fifteen years before, crosses the Orange River into the German Colony, and there defeats the forces which contemplated an invasion of the Union and a linking-up with those who were conspiring against Imperial dominion. And on the top of that, with the laurels of three campaigns upon him (in the Union, in the West and East) he hastens to London to lay his incomparable record at the feet of the Empire, serving in her councils as he had served her as a soldier. Perhaps it is not so strange that unlettered Boers pucker their brows over the case of Smuts. You can only get the key to it if you can follow his soul-flight, can fix his psychology. So far from being inconsistent, his parabola has followed, unswervingly, its appointed path. Given the angle of inclination—Cambridge plus a Dutch ancestry—and the explosive of a fine conscience and convictions, the trajectory must be what it is. His conception of the sufferings of his people: their wanderings in the desert to escape what to them was foreign dominance (though other elements entered in, such as *their* treatment of the natives and our objection to it) forced him into opposition against us. And then when the blind folly of the Raid snapped his sympathy with Rhodes and hurried the country to war, could he have done otherwise than shoulder his gun for the Transvaal? His love revives (for, after all, his "spiritual home" is England, as a " confession " seems to show) for there is the magnanimity of Campbell-Bannerman to blot out the evil days. His talents then are turned to England. This Great War increased his pro-English inclinations because we stood for Right. It is satisfactory to know that in spite of the tragedy of Ireland, of which he would not speak (when I tried to tempt him he said : " I am too far off to judge "), he still is attached to the British Empire. He recognizes what it stands for in the world, as Botha did. We shall not forfeit that esteem until we commit some act of supreme folly, such as inflicting upon South Africa a Governor it will not have.

" But," you say, " is not the present system a Crowned Republic ? Is not the Imperial thread too slight for the weight upon it ? " No doubt. Would, then, the Premier sacrifice all to preserve the thread ? But " crowned republic " or not, you have the quasi-certainty that Smuts will place the interests of South Africa before any living thing whether it is Empire or Separation. That he does not separate redounds to his loyalty, but also to his intelligence. He sees that his country needs a protector just as we need our protégés. The Hertzogian argument, which the Nationalist leader advanced to me at Bloemfontein: that South Africa would be as safe from external attack as the South American Republics would never have been used by Smuts. He knows there is no Monroe doctrine to protect his shores. And the great trans-Atlantic Power so insensible to the League is not likely to intervene in any event. Therefore, it is an allegiance compounded of sense and sentiment that keeps him to Great Britain. On the day when we fail will be the moment to revise his loyalties. Whatever the upshot—and that is on the knees of the gods—Smuts is the indispensable man in South Africa just as is Lloyd George the man paramount in England. I have drawn some comparisons between the two. Their political situation is extraordinarily similar. Both are tethered to a dead weight of conservatism. The British Premier has inherited Tory heirlooms. However quaint and inadequate they are, they must serve as household furniture for want of something modern. Smuts is in the same plight, except that South Africa is by Heaven's ordinance an incorrigibly conservative land, whereas England is not. The veld is steeped in that sort of unprogressiveness, which is fruit of the farmer's fear of innovation and that bovine disinclination to move which may seem stupid but is certainly "safe." It is the trait everywhere—save, perhaps, in Western America—of the agricultural class. If the General moves too quickly he moves alone, whereas if Lloyd George moves faster than the Coalition the door is shut to him, and he is "out" for a long night. He cannot ask the people next door to take him in, for they will remind him of his flagrant youth. Did he not steal the Liberal goods and forget to put them back ?

Smuts' danger is that of remoteness. Wandering on the peaks, he may forget the dwellers in the plain and their hoarse cries for privilege. In his heart of hearts he has a poor estimate, I expect, of the thousand-headed who call for bread and circuses. Bread he will give them, but they may go short on the circuses. Even so, he has played one surprise on us : he has become popular with the masses—not as Botha was, but in his own way. And that public favour will last until the day he spurns it from sheer weariness of soul. On that day you will find him enveloped in the mists of his altitudinous thoughts. Up there he has a chance for that long vision which is his great political asset. In that he differs from his prototype in Downing Street, who lives from day to day in the hollow of a Tory hand. Nor should you wonder at it. Wales is a small country ; South Africa is wide as the world. Moreover, the Boers have the keen vision of the hunter on the boundless plains. In the Anglo-Boer war our Colonial Auxiliaries saw the enemy where Sandhurst and Whitehall saw only the brown and grey stones. Myopia belongs as much to our politics as to our ways of making war. Smuts long-sightedly looks into to-morrow. He sees trouble and runs to head it off. That explains his Native Affairs Act. In private conversation he did not give me the impression of an unshakable belief in native progress. But his telescopic eyes saw the danger of delay. Afar off he descried, no bigger than a man's hand, the cloud of black aspiration. " If I neglect it, it will grow." Thus the Bill. " I will give them a chance to rise," he said, " to prove themselves." The instinct is right and, yet, who shall say that the negro is more than partially evolved ? Boots and clothes do not make him civilized.

Smuts surprised many in the triumph of his elections. Some thought there would be a landslide—away from his inspired leadership. He has gained much, but not enough. He will give us other surprises—perhaps the greatest is yet to come : the crumbling away of that stalwart bogey, Separation.

## III

## PROBLEMS AND PERSONALITIES

WHEN in August, 1920, Viscount Buxton terminated his six years of Governor-Generalship, the stage was cleared for Prince Arthur of Connaught. The new representative of the Crown had problems both difficult and delicate to deal with. Chief amongst them was the duty to attach to Empire the hostile elements which political fortune had riven apart. Notwithstanding Lord Buxton's personal popularity and prestige with the Dutch, the Republican movement gained ground during the War. Why this was so I endeavour to explain in the course of this work. But agitation against the Imperial connection began in its present phase when General Hertzog left the Botha Cabinet. This was in 1912. The ground of his opposition with Botha was that of the Imperial connection. Hertzog pretended that the speakers at the Imperial Conference were going too far in committing South Africa to a policy which meant Militarism, with all its obligations, and he determined to break loose from such a compromising combination. Since that time there has been a cleavage in the Dutch-speaking community as between the Nationalists, or party of Separation and the South African party, which embodies Botha's ideal of conciliation. How much personal pique and how much patriotism, of the perverted sort, there was in the attitude of General Hertzog, I do not pretend to know, but the fact remains that in his mood of rancour and resentment, he has obtained extraordinary hold over the unenlightened back-veld. The personal factor in politics counts, perhaps, for even more than in Great Britain. It obtrudes everywhere. And the man who is temperamentally able to exploit the intellectual limitations of the Boers and their traditional and inherent prejudices is going to enjoy political power—if his conscience opposes no limitations.

" Pure cussedness "—that mulish, but alas ! also human trait—is at the bottom of much of the opposition. When memories are stirred and sentiment is added to " self-determination "—that flaming appeal to all small peoples—then you have a condition favourable to agitation or sullen resistance. It is idle to blink the fact that many a Dutchman—not so much of the old school as one bred in the atmosphere of latter-day partisan literature—has now " no use for " Great Britain. His knowledge of European conditions is not sufficiently profound to enable him to realize the lack of generosity, almost the moral turpitude of his present frame of mind. For the danger of German dominance, which threatened him as it threatened Europe, has passed away, thanks to the heroic action of the Allies ; yet, blinded by secular hatred sedulously fed by a one-sided Press, he has come to believe that South Africa has been England's dupe in the War.

On the eve of the " Hereeniging " conference, which was to heal the political differences of the Dutch, General Hertzog said to me, in a famous interview, that separation from England could only come by consent of the British. He did not explain how he would obtain that consent save on some fantastic assumption that British Afrikanders would sacrifice their birthright to conciliate the Dutch ; yet it would be folly to deny his authority and influence with his own party. Though wholly illogical, he is plausible and plaintive, and " gets home " with his own people. That he appeals to passion rather than to cool judgment is a reason for his success. Mr. Tielman Roos, his rival in the affections of the Nationalists, and the spokesman of the younger section, said in a speech at Pretoria in 1920 : " We have laid it down, over and over again, that our Constitutional propaganda is permitted by and flows from the Constitution of this country, that our intention is to use it to convince the different white races in the country, and that its consummation will be independence founded on the free choice of both white races." Personal ambition, say his critics, is largely responsible for the Hertzog agitation. When Generals Botha and Smuts were in England, attending an Imperial Conference, at which the strands of Empire were being more closely drawn, Hertzog, a member of the Cabinet, protested in intemperate language his hostility to the thesis of Imperial Federation. In that way lay the madness of Militarism and evils affecting private and public liberties. Englishmen in South Africa he denounced as " foreign adventurers." Those speeches led to his resignation from the Cabinet and to a line of action that ended in the formation of the Nationalist Party. He was a judge in the Free State at the time of the Anglo-Boer war. It is alleged that he cherished great ambitions and wished to climb to the highest judicial posts. He is a disappointed man, therefore, in the double sense of politics and his professional career. As a politician, his casuistry amounts to genius. When I asked him how under Separation he proposed to defend South Africa from external attack, he spoke in all seriousness of a million pounds being subscribed " with love " for a South African fleet. How, for instance, such a sum could provide adequate protection in these days of gigantic naval armaments passes the wit of the plain man to conceive. How could it resist, for example, an onslaught from the Far East, which is reputed to have its eyes upon the vast potentialities of South Africa ? Yet, for all his disconcerting vagueness—or perhaps because of it—he has great hold upon the Dutch farmers living remote from civilization. His arrival in a Dutch dorp is often the signal for a great demonstration in his favour.

Hertzog, notwithstanding his attitude to-day, subscribed formally to the peace of Vereeniging, which put an end to our hostilities with the Boers. He and other leaders—though they seem now to be unconscious of it—gave assurance of whole-hearted acceptance of the British connection at the time of Union. This fact is historical, beyond dispute. The attempt to repudiate it is to reduce the agreement to " a scrap of paper." And yet there is nothing more certain than that the Republic of Hertzog is grotesquely unreal and could not last. It would be swallowed up by its own difficulties. It is an incongruous intellectual conception. For, mark you, the founder of it proposes no freedom for the black races—merely an enlarged freedom, a freedom to kick over the traces for the Dutch. It is clear from his statement to me that he is no more advanced in his policy towards the native than the least of his supporters in the Back of Beyond. He endorses—and exemplifies—the latter's reactionary spirit. His imaginary Republic is an anachronism. It is as if the English barons of the Middle Ages were to call for a Republic—to show their displeasure with the King—and to say " *We* are the Republic." Hertzog is the Simon de Montfort in a Republic of Barons, with every farmer a Baron.

The Republican idea, if we regard it seriously, cannot be dissociated from the native. He is painfully aware that he has nothing to hope for from the complete dominance of the Dutch. His bulwark and buckler are the Union Jack, the Imperial connection, the right of appeal to the Privy Council. Though natives to whom I have spoken show no partiality for the British farmer, claiming that he is little better than the Dutch, they recognize that in the British Crown is a last refuge

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from oppression and restrictions either in the name of " moral improvement " or to exploit them in some new cunning way. Here you have, indeed, the good side of the Imperial connection. The bad side is heedless interference with Colonial methods of self-protection. In the Free State, where the native is less considered, perhaps, than elsewhere, the burgher population cavils at the sturdy independence of the Basuto safe in his Protectorate under the British flag. And yet history records that the same Free State desired re-annexation to the Empire because of fear of the native. The latter has been always a pawn in the Imperial game whether played from Downing Street or Pretoria. That Imperial connection, however, may change a little with the new status. The Privy Council appeal is affected, probably, in practice if not in principle. But " native rights," will always gain their lordships' ear, whatever the decision of the judiciary at Bloemfontein. That is the talisman which Jim the Kaffir grasps in spite of Hertzog.

The risk of realizing the Hertzogian dream is not confined to natives. It would entail civil war amongst the whites. Indeed, Sir Percy Fitzpatrick alluded to the secessionists as the " Civil War Party " in the Bloemfontein conference to link the South African Party with the Unionists in 1920. Even in the Free State, that stronghold of recalcitrant Dutch, a considerable minority—represented at the last elections (1921) by nearly one-half—supports Great Britain. The British influence on the Rand, though lessened since the advent of the Dutch miners, goes far to balance the Transvaal back-veld. Rather more than half voted for Secession in the 1921 appeal. In Natal only one out of five favours any change, and in Cape Province the proportion is one to two. Hertzog knows this. He knows, also, that every settlement scheme put forward by the Government threatens the Dutch majority. He knows that progress is against him, just as ignorance and reaction are with him. He will hesitate to plunge the country into bloodshed for a cause which, after all, may not satisfy his personal ambitions. The older class of his supporters, at any rate, have painful recollections of their encounters with the Imperial arm which must act as a deterrent.

Hertzog gives me the impression of a passionate patriot, sincere but highly inflammable—" going off at half-cock," in our familiar phrase. He has all the native faculty of the Boers for guerrilla warfare. He likes to drop a shot unexpectedly, to disconcert his enemy by an ambush. Early in 1913, after his split with Botha, he started from Bloemfontein to visit a remote Dutch dorp. To a friend he said he would make but the barest allusion to his break with his former colleagues. Any other course, he held, would be improper. I have no doubt he meant to keep his word, but the contiguity of his own countrymen, bred and born as he was upon the veld and inheriting the tradition of the hateful British, overcame all resolutions and he uttered the wildest diatribes. The Ministers of the day were dishonest, moral cowards, who trembled at the name of England—men unworthy to hold office in a free community. Thus he railed, his invectives rising higher and higher. That is the man : irresponsible, a prey to his own emotions. The backvelder has strong tastes, and enjoys the rancid oratory of the General when he is most deeply under the influence of bad old memories.

I have said that General Hertzog is illogical and has a positive genius for confusing an issue. " Ah," said a bygone Lord Chancellor, during a great trial before the House of Lords, " the case was *so* clear before Mr. Smith addressed us ! " Hertzog's confrères at the South African Bar feel exactly the same after he has addressed the Bench in his old quality of pleader. He has the faculty of making the plain thing hopelessly involved. He has no logical sense, and his diffused mind is the terror of experts who have to try to follow him. If only he had frankly declared that he wanted "secession now," that that was his minimum, a lot of misapprehension would have been removed. But he preferred to speak vaguely and employ phrases the exact significance of which escaped most listeners. But on the back-veld he is a power precisely because of his violence and malign gift for arousing all the old passions. He will not let sleeping dogs lie. He is perpetually raking over the ashes to find a live coal. Generally, he succeeds in rekindling the old hatreds. Yet he is not unattractive as a man, though his bland and innocent expression changes—strangely enough, with the assumption of his glasses—to something that is fox-like in its look of cunning. His manners are rather charming and disarming. Thus his attacks are the more dangerous because he creates an atmosphere favourable to his purpose, which is to make you believe what he wants.

Mr. Tielman Roos, Chairman of the Transvaal section of Nationalism, is his principal coadjutor and promises to become more powerful than his chief, simply, I think, because he is more bitter, if such is possible, and uncompromising. And his special gift lies in saying the most corrosive thing with an engaging air of frankness and good feeling. His manner of delivery, like that of Hertzog, is most ingratiating when his matter is most poisonous. From the same fountain seems to flow sweet and bitter waters. He is both sweetly reasonable and explosive in argument. Yet he is more direct and straightforward in his statements than Hertzog, so that his intentions are clearly seen. There is no shadow of doubt about them. By many he is regarded as the virtual leader of the Party, for he has great energy and persistence, and is afraid of nothing. Yet he has a sardonic humour, which is sometimes misunderstood by the more literally minded of his followers. He is suspected of lightness, of a certain frivolity—serious defect in the eyes of a grimly earnest people. They are not always certain what he means. Is he serious when he talks in his airy and cynical strain ? Yet he has a growing hold upon the intellectuals of the Party. His extreme views commend him to the younger Nationalists, who are inspired not so much by traditional grievances as a burning desire to prove themselves capable of self-government in its widest sense—as the equal of any European Power. They regard Roos as the spearhead of their movement for " emancipation."

In a speech delivered at the Orangia Association in Cape Town in the early days of the War, Mr. Roos first hinted at the necessity of secession in the interests of true national development. General Hertzog, on the other hand, owes his celebrity and reputation with " Het Volk " to his insistence on bilingualism. Botha and Smuts were inclined to go softly on the question, fearing to make difficulties by a too harsh insistence upon it. But Hertzog, with his whole-hogger nature, had no such fears. In season and out of season he waved the banner of bilingualism until, by the very fact of his insistence, he became the head and front of the movement. But his leadership, as I suggest, is threatened by Mr. Roos, like him a lawyer and, indeed, an advocate with the biggest criminal practice in South Africa.

The other parties in the State are led by men of parts and distinction. The head of the British or Unionist Party (now incorporated) is Sir Thomas Smartt, formerly a doctor in practice in Britstown, in the Karroo, which as it happens is a hotbed of Nationalism. Dr. Smartt, as he then was, was intensely popular in the neighbourhood. Everybody sent for him, even the most confirmed political opponents, and such is his charity that often he charged nothing for his services. He was famous, even in those days, for his breed of sheep and of late years has become identified with an irrigation scheme which, starting with his own estate, has extended to others.

A great dam has been built which holds up a lake several miles in length. Water is laid on to the various plots by means of the hatch-system employed in Hampshire water meadows. Sir Thomas has kept his party together under circumstances of difficulty and now has determined, rightly, to merge its political fortunes in those of the South African Party. He feels that the work of the group, as a separate political unit, is finished, and that amalgamation will mean greater strength. Suave and debonair in his relations, Sir Thomas has not the temperament of a political "boss" in the party sense. But he has sound judgment, based on experience, and certainly showed it in accepting the Premier's invitation to associate in the formation of a new party "strong enough to safeguard the permanent interests of the Union against the disruptive and destructive forces." "There was no other alternative," the Premier insisted, "but to draw closer to one another. . . . The internal development and strengthening of South Africa must be promoted by the co-operation, in every respect, of both European races." Public lawlessness and indiscipline, which are threatening the Old World, must be kept in check. "These and other objects can best be secured by a political party, which declares itself against revolution, violation of the Constitution or lawlessness in any shape or form."

This bid to the Unionists (so called because of their fundamental adherence to the Act of Union—the Charter of South Africa to-day)—was quickly acted upon. Under the name of Progressives, the party had responded to the genius of Cecil Rhodes, and, subsequently, to the lovable leadership of his henchman, Leander Starr Jameson. Sir Thomas lays no claim to superior parliamentary qualities. He never managed to establish discipline and, on crucial questions, his followers voted much as they pleased without reference to party leadership. The result was the strangest associations as when Mr. J. W. Jagger, the millionaire economist, found himself voting on the same side as Colonel Creswell, the then Labour leader. But few can escape the pervasive charm of Sir Thomas, or deny his " savoir faire " in all circumstances demanding tact and diplomacy. For that reason he was mentioned for the High Commissionership in England. And no more fitting choice could have been made. Happily, the present holder, Sir Edgar Walton, has brought dignity and experience to the office. But in his present post of Minister of Agriculture, in the Smuts Cabinet, Sir Thomas serves a cause which he has greatly at heart and to which he has made a rare and successful contribution. He has the secret, apparently, of perpetual youth, and his sixty years seem to be belied in his fresh and greyless appearance. Nor is this due to leisure, for he takes none, and is perpetually at work reading late into the night the books that are his inveterate companions.

Another notable member of the Party is Mr. Jagger, who has the disadvantage, politically, of being surpassingly rich. He possesses one of the most flourishing wholesale draper's businesses in Cape Town and is, as I have indicated, a noted economist. He started life as a commercial traveller, and has proved that South Africa holds out a fortune to the man of intelligence and perseverance. One of his schemes is to do with settling the British emigrant upon the land in South Africa, and to that end he has established an organization having offices in London and Cape Town, where the young man in quest of fortune overseas may learn what is necessary for him to know. His position in the Smuts Government is that of Minister of Railways. There is in his benevolent-looking features and alert intellect something of ancient Greece touched and corrected, I should say, by an acute perception of the needs of to-day. A man to reckon with in any Party and maintaining the respect of the House.

Amongst his immediate associates is Mr. John X. Merriman, whom I was privileged to meet at a luncheon party arranged by Sir Thomas Smartt in the dining-room of the House—a handsome apartment hung with portraits of distinguished South Africans and of some occupants of Government House. He is the most original figure in Anglo-Dutch politics. He is over eighty years of age, and still active and upright in carriage. You may often see his tall, aristocratic figure in the beautiful Government Avenue leading from the Mount Nelson Hotel, where he resides during the session, to Parliament House. He is delightfully kind to young politicians making their way in the House, and will give them always the benefit of his long experience and knowledge of Parliamentary procedure. Mrs. Merriman waits up for him, however protracted the sitting, in order that she may heat the milk that "John X" (as he is universally called) drinks before he goes to bed. In debate in the House he is caustic and enjoys saying a sharp pointed thing. Apparently he revels in paradox, to the fury of those who do not understand him. Sometimes his "bon mot" is very telling, as when he said of some Labour members, after a certain celebrated wit: "They are like flies in amber; one wonders how in the devil they got there." When he completed his jubilee in 1919 as Member of the House—he has sat almost continuously for Stellenbosch—he had to listen to speeches of congratulation from all parts of the Assembly. He is universally respected, but he is too uncertain to have power. He has been known to start a speech favourable to the Government and conclude it with a damaging attack. He cannot refrain from indulging a mordant wit. His father was Bishop of Grahamstown, and a remarkable pedestrian who thought nothing of walking several hundreds of miles on tour. During these expeditions he would visit Boer farmhouses and receive hospitality from the astonished inmates, who could not understand that any man should elect to walk when he could ride. It was a gentle form of madness, they felt. Mr. J. X. Merriman's mother, a quite remarkable woman, lived until the Act of Union, and was disappointed that her septuagenarian son was not the first Prime Minister under it. Though he has received much of his brilliancy from the female side of his house, Mr. Merriman does not favour woman's suffrage, and the feminist newspaper of South Africa notes the fact with great bitterness of spirit. It is not detached enough to regard it as merely another example of his oddity.

Then there is the Labour Party, which up to the election in 1921 was led by Colonel Creswell, a mining engineer, who sacrificed a well-paid post on the altar of what he conceived to be his duty to the community. His protest was against the employment of Chinese in the mines, and as this did not harmonize with mine policy he had to go, thereby sacrificing £3,000 a year with a house and carriage provided by the company. He pursued a rather zigzag course in politics, playing in and out to the Nationalists in a somewhat futile effort, as it seemed, to wring concessions from a farmers' Parliament. No love is lost between the advocates of Socialism and the rigid Dutch section that follows after Hertzog. One of the most active spirits amongst the Parliamentary Socialists is Mr. Thomas Boydell, who recently declared: "In spite of all their talk about freedom and republicanism, the Nationalists are always out for political freedom for themselves, but very little economic freedom for the workers. Their freedom would be the freedom to starve."

Mr. Boydell is now the organizer of a much diminished Labour section in Parliament. He has the eye of a blackbird, beady and enquiring, and a bird's lively temperament. He is sartorially distinguished for never wearing a hat, and his abundant locks seem to testify to the liberality of his ideals. His party is something of a forlorn hope in the political atmosphere of Cape Town, but his own philosophy is proof against depression. He tilts at capital as if he had a host behind him. I fancy he is buoyed by thoughts of an approaching social revolution. He began his South African career as a fitter employed at the Durban harbour works.

These, then, are the men around the Prince, with whom his Royal Highness will come into contact. Perhaps exception may be made of the Nationalists, who, during the Buxton regime, studiously avoided attending the functions at Government House. But by his tact and courtesy Lord Buxton won over many oppositions and, before he left, the most pronounced opponents of the British connection found themselves partaking of his hospitality. Much the same thing may be expected now that a Royal Governor, renowned for his tact, is installed at Cape Town.

## IV

## BOER AND BRITON

SUCH are the limitations of the human vision, and such the cloying influence of hedge-like politics—not to speak of that power of suggestion persistently dispensed by the Press—that one is tempted to consider sometimes that the only question that matters in South Africa is the one between Briton and Boer. How interminably vast has been the discussion of these relations! We never seem to be able to escape them. The papers are full of them. Dutch and English editors thrust at one another. They discover each other's perfidy. Half the political articles derive their nutriment from quotations from the contemporary. "Just listen to this," says one, and reels off the atrocious things the other has penned. If your flesh does not creep it is because you lack the sensibility proper to the true newspaper reader. The danger is in taking these things too seriously—or not seriously enough. In the first case, you give undue importance to mere mischief, to the tweaking of John Bull's nose; in the second, you fail to see that, behind it all, is a serious political enterprise. "Republicanism is a formidable movement," said General Smuts to me in a conversation on the new Dominion status which went the round of the world. And he added, "the Nationalists are not all mad." That was in May, 1920, a few months before the remarkable meeting at Bloemfontein, in which the two Dutch parties—the South African Party and the Nationalists—sought a ground of common accord. No, the Nationalists are not all mad—at least there is method in their madness, and the movement to separate from England represents a settled state of mind. Except under excitement this feeling lies dormant, but the Boer carries it in his heart. He bears his stone a long way : that is his nature, and this particular stone is his memory of the Boer wars and what led up to them. He cannot forget, nor, I think, does he wish to ; he nurses his sorrows in the spirit of those who take a melancholy pleasure in funerals and graveyards.

Nor is it to be wondered at that he should hanker after the old days. They can never return because the world has changed ; but he is not sufficiently in the world to realize that. For the Boer of the extremer type lives chiefly in the back-veld, far from the haunts of men. The more ignorant he is, the more impoverished and unsuccessful, the more readily he receives the Nationalist doctrine. A large farmer, with whom I stayed in the Karroo for a few days in 1920, had some neighbours of this class. " Most of them could not put down a sovereign on the table," he declared. " They are the most ardent of all, and will talk politics all day. That is why they are unsuccessful. They will always leave their work to attend a political meeting ; they will trek miles for the purpose. An absence of several days does not daunt them if the business is politics or a church meeting—which is sometimes the same thing. I have known men who were left well off by their fathers, but who went to pieces utterly through politics. They neglected everything for it : wife, family and farm. They had to go into the town and seek work there. Sometimes they come to me to ask for a job. But why should I help them to buy rifles to shoot me in the back to-morrow morning ? "

Their arguments are strange. " Botha wanted to send my boy to the French war," (*sic*) said one to my friend, and another declared : " England is making us pay for the war." "How is that?" the Englishman asked. "Don't you see? This exchange business. The sovereign is only worth twelve and sixpence. Now, South African credit is high above par, so I reckon we are being robbed of many shillings in the £. And, who is benefiting? England!"

Such sophistry, however absurd, is swallowed by the credulous. If their leaders do not deliberately make misstatements they profit by them by allowing them to go uncorrected. Yet all Nationalists do not belong to this class. If they did, the movement would be less dangerous to the Imperial connection. The backbone of the party is the backvelder, with all his prejudices and historic rancours; but the head and heart are young men in the towns, sentimental, if you will, but educated and enthusiastic. There is nothing they will not do for the cause: they are "whole-hoggers." They march with extraordinary "élan" under the banner of independence. To them is opened a splendid vision of national development. Associated with the political ideal is a literary and intellectual ideal, a whole scheme, in fact, of national reconstruction. The setting up of a Dutch Republic stretching from the Cape to the Zambesi, for that is the ultimate aim and not the mere re-establishment of the Boer Republics, would synchronize with the enthronement of the Taal, gloriously camouflaged under the name of "Afrikaans." And this Afrikaans is as much part of the symbolism of Dutch South Africa as the Vierkleur or the Volksleid. In it is embalmed the living grain of liberty, the rustling, deep-breathing spirit of poetry, of austerity, of patriotism as it appeals to the Boer. To hear this language spoken or to see it written suggests nothing of its inward force, potency and charm. That lies in its associations, in the fact that it expresses the aspirations of a people. Whatever its crass and patent inferiority to the long-settled languages with a tradition, whatever its halting, truncated and impotent appearance before the great linguistic media of the world, it is still the mirror of a nation's soul, and precious in its eyes.

It is easy to say there is no literature in Afrikaans, that it is a mixture of all the tongues spoken in South Africa; that, until yesterday, it had no grammar (now bestowed upon it by enthusiastic specialists); that it was a poor, invertebrate, polyglot thing, which maintained a precarious living on the high veld until rescued, clothed and brought to town to stand in the market-place as the living embodiment of the Nationalist ideal. Too true. "Et après?" However emaciated it may be in a linguistic sense, it is yet a creature dear to its progenitors. The stricken child is often the best loved. That is the mystery and pathos of parenthood. And so this ewe lamb of a language has come into being and is doing increasingly well. Clothes from the international store have been bought for its puny body. Thus, its adjectives are mostly English while its substantives are formed of High Dutch, popularized in spelling and pronunciation; of English, German, French and kaffir words. It started out in life without any inflections. "We is" was the common locution. But it is gradually overcoming these defects in its early existence and is developing a bony structure with its grown-up clothes. About five thousand words have been grafted on to the original Dutch, and this polyglot family is continually spreading. Holland has now accepted it, whatever she thinks of it, and there are courses in the language at the University of Haarlem. It is possible to study law, medicine and divinity in the medium. "It has gone far beyond the patois stage and has been elevated into a real language," say those who are giving the years of their youth and their knowledge and enthusiasm to perfect it. They are extremely touchy on the question. "Love me, love my language," is their attitude. Afrikaans is the flag of Nationalism.

Some charming poetry has been written in it. The poets have been hailed as masters—possibly because they have no rivals. For the same reason, doubtless, commonplace books have been magnified into works of supreme merit. It is the pride of the builder in his own house. The poetry may seem lean enough beside the sonorous splendour of Shakespeare and Milton, but it enshrines a national spirit and, as such, should be respected and studied. It is a document of value. Constantly it is being moulded nearer the heart's desire of those who would see in it the perfect expression of new Nationalism.

And now they realize that the pulpit, like the literature, must be popularized—no longer appealing to the few. Predikants are beginning to pray and preach in the tongue. An older generation was a little shocked at the thought of addressing the Deity in the vernacular, for hitherto High Dutch has been considered the only suitable medium for such a purpose. But, now, even the ancient sticklers are reconciled to the idea of popularizing Jehovah by employing a language understood of all. For it is notorious that half the faithful are unable to follow the High Dutch of the predikant. Many a pious Boer finds the Bible of his ancestors undecipherable, though through long habit he has become habituated to the phrases. To-day a version in Afrikaans is being prepared, and this will bring the Word straight to the comprehension of the peasant.

The democracy of the new language, which is half-way between High Dutch and the Taal, is its strongest point. Those who speak it feel on an equality with each other for, in its plain and simple speech, there can be no accent of superiority.

Surely it is our duty to understand the meaning and the strength of Nationalism and not to sneer at it or disregard it! For it is not negligible; indeed, it is an expanding thing, ever widening its circles, ever presenting new facets to the light of day. Its tongue is warm and human and extremely familiar in its utterance. It exhales the atmosphere of "thee" and "thou." It is a hand-upon-the-shoulder language, a vehicle for homely folk. It is unpretentious, and thus reflects the simple aspirations of unlettered people. "We want neither to be great nor grand," said a pretty Dutch Afrikander to me as we rambled over the ruins of Zimbabwe. "We want simply to be free." "Free? But you are free." The young lady looked astonished, and pointed to a Union Jack floating over an Englishman's house near by. "We want our own flag there," she said. "We don't mind how poor we are. We just want to be in our own home." "But the English—and your promise to them?" "I am not going into that," she said, with the charming inconsequence of her sex. "You must ask my brother about that. But I will tell you something: there is no reason why we two—our two nations," she explained with amusing haste—"should not be perfectly friendly!" "Why should not the English Afrikanders unite in friendship with our own people? Their interests are the same."

I found the same argument somewhat naïvely expressed by General Hertzog, whom I saw a few weeks later at Bloemfontein on the eve of the famous conference which was to unite the Dutch people into one party. "As I told Mr. Lloyd George in Paris," he said, "separation from Great Britain does not mean that we must stand totally aloof. On the contrary, my firm conviction is that the freer we are and the more independent of Great Britain, the more the feeling of this country will be in favour of the closest co-operation with Great Britain." This conviction is extraordinarily common in South Africa—that the way to bind us closer is to break the bonds! A similar conviction exists amongst the old Boers. Mr. Thomas Mackenzie, the editor of the Bloemfontein *Friend*, told me of a conversation he had had with a typical backvelder. The good man showed a touching faith in English generosity. The flag was to be hauled down, but a sort of suzerainty was to take its place. Suzerainty, Mr. Mackenzie pointed out, had been the cause of all the trouble before; it had led to war. "Well," said the other confidentially, "perhaps they would lend us the fleet—if we would pay for it. You see, those Japs might try tricks if there were no warships about. They might bombard Cape Town and Durban, eh?" Sublime belief in British magnanimity! Behind it all is the firmly cherished hope that the Britisher is not as set upon the connection as he seems to be in print and in speeches at public banquets. "If we point out to him that his interests will be safeguarded and that we shall make a stronger South Africa than before because all the Dutch are united, and are working on the same lines, then his good practical sense will tell him to be on the winning side. He will fear to be left out in the cold."

This argument, which is often heard in the mouth of the Nationalists, receives, no doubt, some justification from the aloofness of the British. Natal's lukewarmness in elections is notorious. Through abstentions from the poll at Durban there was a Unionist landslide in 1920, to the profit of Labour and ultimately to the weakening of the Government. Like the Germans, the Dutch in Africa are often inclined to believe that their British neighbours are as indifferent to the Imperial connection as they are to recording their votes. But there is little analogy between the two. Natal abstains from the polling booth not so much from indifference as from disappointment. She feels that she is out of it, politically, as the result of Union. She remembers with a certain vexation the days when she led, through her own governor and Parliament, an independent existence. It is true she went into it with her eyes open, for the sake of unity, being convinced that it was wise in the interests of South Africa. But there was little sentiment about it; it was a marriage of convenience. And, moreover, the match-makers bluffed. Natal was told that her neighbours had resolved upon Union, and had passed solemn votes to that effect, and that if she did not join the family party she would be squeezed out of everything. But later, when the deed was done, Lord Selborne let the cat out of the bag in a speech at Durban. He congratulated Natal on linking up with the others, but said plainly that if she had stood aloof there would have been no Union. Natal, indeed, was cajoled into joining, and is now inclined to regret it. Being, however, a good practical soul, and honest with the honesty that is, happily, still our trait in the world, she has turned not to intrigue but to business as a distraction from displeasure. She is more set than ever upon making money, for the "bawbees" are a form of consolation. Even in her vexation of soul, her strong commercial instincts prevail. Like a canny Scot, she exploits her own mood and turns her touch of disdain into goods and still more goods. Durban waxes fat, and is exceeding rich with a taxable value of twelve millions, but she is in danger of losing her own soul. All her energies are devoted to commerce, and Labour slips in as the representative of the one community which cares and seeks diligently for its own salvation. In the election of February, 1921, Durban became the Labour centre of the Union; elsewhere, it had lost ground. Labour profits from the absence of competitors to advance its own fortune. Though sound upon the Imperial connection, this Labour delegation hardly represents the attitude of the traditional British Afrikander on questions of the day.

The Dutch complain constantly of the Englishman's use of the word "home." Africa is never home to him, though he may stay in it thirty years. Even his children may contract this habit of mind, though they may know little or nothing of England, having visited it, perhaps, only once on a short holiday. The British Colonial is always talking about "home." "Why did he ever come out here since his heart is there?" asks the Dutchman. "Then, again, the moment he makes money out of Africa he returns 'home' to spend it. That is not fair." It is true that the original British settler is likely enough to return home to spend his fortune, but his son is not in the same case; he prefers South Africa as a permanent place of residence. He thinks of the climate and the ease of life and contrasts it with the winters in England, the perpetual rain, high taxes and discomfort of houses without servants. Moreover, he acknowledges without shame his inability to follow politics in the old country. He has lost touch with politicians, and what they stand for. They are scarcely more than names to him. The scrappiness of information from the other side daunts him; he cannot follow the march of events. They seem to him to follow a zigzag course, puzzling in its irregularity and inconsistency. But South African politics he knows through and through: the slim Dutch, the too-confiding or merely blundering British. . . . His last political state is rather worse than the first. He knows, but it is sterile knowledge, for he does not act upon it. He is supine because he has not taken these things seriously. He has broken with the old love and is not yet fully on with the new. His attention has never been aroused, his nerves tightened by the need of watchfulness. The material things of life possess him.

This is just the atmosphere for those who are concentrating every effort on liberation. It explains to some extent the success of Nationalism. It is a cry that awakens the echoes of the past and resonates through the valleys of long memories. "Let us free ourselves from these foreign influences, from those who speak of 'home' as across the seas, from the Laodiceans and political invalids who have a weak pulse and are constantly propping themselves up on the pillows of an ancient prestige. Take away these; make way for the earnest patriots who have a definite ideal, who know what they want, who have joined hands to secure freedom from an old superstition, which keeps our hearts in bondage!" It is easy to see how powerful suggestion is when it has a background of facts to work upon. There is the fact of our early misunderstandings and conflicts with the Boers. There is the fact of our present lethargy and ineffectiveness. What was the programme of the Unionists in Parliament—before they became absorbed by the South African Party? Does anybody know? The great personality of Rhodes had gone, and that of his henchman, the lovable "Dr. Jim"; none of outstanding force and character remained to lead the party in new directions. Such as were there went their own ways, drifting here and drifting there without fixed policy, but that of interest, without discipline as without inspiration.

The Dutch extremists, with their habitual astuteness, have seen the opportunity and taken it. When the Great War came they were convinced that Germany would win. Even those who were not definitely hostile to us affected a neutral air, though to their glory and honour many realized the position and threw in their lot with the Empire-defenders. But the irreconcilables said: "Germany must win." Then the Kitchener armies came—"A mere rabble," they exclaimed. After that came the forced drafts. "Ho! ho! the conscripts," roared the back-veld. And then when the War was over—after Great Britain had escaped annihilation several times—the same critics were convinced that we must succumb to our financial burdens and Labour troubles. But, amazing to say, Britain does not succumb but continues to battle courageously against the flood.

It is not sufficient merely to condemn, merely to write " traitor " as a footnote to our character sketch of these persons. It is necessary to try to understand, and one of the things we have to understand is the old-time simplicity of the Boer, his dislike of ceremony, his contempt of the artificial. Courteous by nature, he is also by nature the enemy of obsequiousness. He finds difficulty in bending his back. He is no courtier. Solemnity and dignity are in his stiff frock-coat, but if his body is outwardly polite his thoughts have wandered away to the old days of the Republics, when the Presidents moved freely amongst their people, " thee'd " and " thou'd " them, and social, political and everyday business passed in an atmosphere of coffee and Boer tobacco. Now he says, a little bitterly, " I am told to stand further off. I must not do any talking until I am addressed. I want the ' personal touch ' when Steyn and Kruger moved about, like you and me, and shook us by the hand and asked after the children." In their hearts they rebel against constraints that are foreign to their blood and to their simple and hearty beliefs. One young Dutchman who served with a British regiment in the Great War told me what was wanting was the human note in relations between officers and men. " But, surely," said I, who had seen something of it, " there is a real bond between the two ? " " Oh, certainly," he replied ; " the officers take a deep interest and the men respond by loyalty ; but beneath it all you feel it is the feudal system. Here in this great Africa it is different. No one pays court, no one curves the spine. I know distinction and family tradition are great and splendid and there is a *something*, clean and upstanding, that marks an Englishman from another man, who isn't one. And yet . . . I prefer South Africa and its freedom. Yes, I admit it: there are no 'gentlemen' with us. Every one works; there is no leisured class, no aristocracy. Every white man is equal."

In the Dutch Church, the same spirit prevails. Respect is maintained without formality. They stand up to pray and sit down to sing. The Nachtmaal, or Lord's Supper, is of great significance—not merely in a religious but a social sense as well. It means the gathering together of the clans—an occasion for contact and exchange of views. In its utter simplicity it reflects the character of the communicants. Even the bridal marriage robe is often black in the Dutch Reformed Church.

There is great resemblance between the Highland Scotch and the Boers. The landscape, especially in those parts where the land is bleak and wild, is similar and the farms seem to follow the same model. You have the modest dwelling-house, with the byre and piggery in close attendance so that their inmates, human and animal, appear to form one family. The Sunday meetings at the church are, in both cases, characteristic and point to a love in each people of human fellowship, as well as a vast concern for each other's affairs. Each has a rigid Puritan sense, a sturdy, unbending spirit, an outlook narrow and obstinately conservative and a love for independence that nothing can shake. They would not exchange their semi-barren but none the less beloved patrimony for the most glittering opportunities of the townsman. They would stifle in the towns. They place their freedom before all things.

It is possible to carry the analogy too far. However admirable the Dutch are in many of their attributes, it would be beside the mark to compare them too closely with the Scotch, whose particular virtues are seen so strongly in their history and daily achievements. Moving in a totally different theatre, the Dutch Afrikanders have exhibited courage, clanship and stubborn attachment to their rights and to the soil, but their view from Pisgah has seemed to lack the spirituality of the Scot. There is no fierce love of education for its own sake such as distinguishes the whole people north of the Tweed and leads them to make tremendous sacrifices for their children's sake ; nor is there observable that subtle domestic efficiency, akin to godliness, which results in spotless houses, thrifty management and a light and skilful hand in cooking. The mind, on the contrary, raises up pictures of Dutch squalor unsurpassed, probably, by any peasant people except in the Ireland of the old days : the wretched lean-to occupied by the family, the sexes huddled together indiscriminately, chickens and pigs sharing the same quarters. Even when money was coming in to the extent of £30 a month, earned by one of the sons at Johannesburg, the family I have in mind altered not one jot or tittle of their method of life. Though the house they had moved into had six rooms, they occupied only two of them. The great four-poster bed still accommodated parents and children by night and served as a storeroom by day. An oak chest in the same apartment held not merely the family papers, such as they were, but a broody hen, sitting, by the way, on the good man's Sunday coat. In the only other room, which had even a semblance of being furnished, were six Muscovy ducks ; and, I repeat, the income of this household was not less than £360 per annum.

The problem of the poor whites is as persistent as the drought, and shows about the same ratio of increase. And not the least danger is the illiteracy of these people. Many are unable to read, and show no desire to have their children taught. Even the Government's offer of facilities to get the children to school in remote country districts is often disregarded, and the younger generation is left without any instruction at all. A certain class of Dutch lead a semi-nomadic life remote from everyone, living on the " biltong " of the buck they shoot, and selling the rest; driving their herds afield over the open veld, or taking up farming on cheap, poor land, which suits a taste for savage solitude as well as that ruder kind of agriculture, which would discourage a more advanced type of farmer, or one less given to solitude. Hard to keep track of in these wildernesses, they are generally out of reach of the towns, for their farms are far off from the railway, a fortnight's trek, perhaps, from any centre. Thus they can elude the best efforts of the school attendance officer. Their children grow up utterly untaught and in manners and intelligence are below the native. It is not they who uphold the prestige of the white man amongst their black neighbours, and being untrained and lacking in initiative, they not infrequently become the servants of the prosperous black. Contrast their inertia and increasing inefficiency with the keenness of the native to learn all the knowledge of the white race, and you have the secret of a poignant problem! The poor white is slipping downhill. But he is a greater menace in the towns to which he drifts than in the country. Unskilled in any trade, lacking education, or any sort of stamina, he is at first the prey of and then the leader in any agitation. Worse still, he is a danger in politics, for he is almost always unenlightened, and his temper is uncertain. Formerly his home was on the far veld, where he was less considered than the cattle as being less remunerative. But he added his dull force to the existing conservatism, and thus buttressed the old system. More backward and reactionary than any white human creature, he has been smoked out of his holes into the towns, and there left to shift for himself either by expedients or by sheer hard work. Sometimes he chooses the latter, and " makes good." Indeed, this experience is not as rare as it was. One of the causes pushing him to the new life is the progressive exhaustion of the land under primitive tillage and the consequent inability or disinclination of the Boers to provide for poor relations, whose competence is in inverse proportion to the size of their families. And so these people are more and more driven to seek town occupations for which they are quite unsuited. Indeed, one of the problems of the hour is how to secure the return of these outcasts to the land. Amongst the town population there is none less qualified than they to earn a livelihood, having neither the training of clerks nor mechanics. They cannot perform "kaffir's work," for that is against the convention, as unchangeable as the laws of the Medes and Persians, and thus they are condemned to dubious expedients and improvisations. They live from hand to mouth. Dissolute and disconsolate in appearance, they carry the mark of the beast upon them in blue-veined noses and blanched, unshaven cheeks. The marvel is that the black retains any respect at all for these degraded white men. But prestige, like prejudice, dies slowly, and the native, particularly in the raw state, is ever susceptible to the suggestion of the conquering race. The only salvation of the poor white in the towns, whether Dutch or British, is education and training in arts and crafts. The more intelligent of the Dutch have realized that and preach efficiency to their countrymen. Says one enlightened spirit: "We must imitate the English and give manual training to our youths. In that resides the British superiority." And a first consequence of this advice is an unusually large attendance of Dutch pupils at technical and trade schools in the hope of attaining the skill and dexterity of the British mechanic.

Where there is ambition to take such a step, the material is usually good enough; indeed, the characteristic of the Dutch student in the higher branches of knowledge is extreme ability. He distinguishes himself at Oxford or Cambridge, and in any of the learned professions. He has a decided penchant towards law, a mind that seems to revel in subtleties. But here we are speaking of a superior class, separated by intellect as by family history, from the illiterate and backward farmer of the remote veld. There is an immeasurable gulf fixed between, say, the refined and intellectual Dutchman of the big centres, such as Cape Town and Pretoria, and his brother of the Back of Beyond. " Ils ne sont pas de la même espèce "—to paraphrase the utterance of a character in one of Bernstein's plays. These mortals of a higher type, evolved out of a pious and robust parentage, began their school curriculum sometimes as late as fourteen, spending their first years on a farm where, whilst they herded cattle, or learnt the elements of agriculture, they laid in a priceless stock of health and bodily activity. Then, with their high energies still glowing from the out-of-door and with eyes sharpened by the daily search of far horizons, they took their splendid health to school and began in the lowest class. Their companions, looking at their towering adolescence, regarded them as curiosities. Sir John Beattie, the distinguished head of Cape Town University, told me that some of his best students came to him that way. For the first dozen years or so of their lives, they had escaped all schoolroom knowledge except, perhaps, the alphabet and simple sums. Then they had taken suddenly to books, like ducks to water. This was the case with General Smuts, who herded swine for his father until he was fourteen. Then a strong and lusty boy, skilled in wood-craft and field-lore, he brought a fresh and vigorous mind to his studies. He leapt over obstacles which must have seemed insuperable to those who had painfully grubbed amongst the " roots." So much of the so-called " ground-work " in our schools is just rubbish, choking and discouraging where it should quicken and satisfy. To fly over the tree-tops is one way—and an excellent one—to see the country.

Even the bigots of the back-veld have one redeeming quality, happily for our poor humanity: they are hospitable. The poorest, upon your travels, will offer you coffee should you come to his stoep. It will not be good coffee, but his intentions will be excellent. Thereafter, you will be the best of friends. Personally, I have received many courtesies from the Boers. In motoring with ladies from Cape Town to Port Elizabeth in great, wide stretches of country where we met hardly a soul, we would encounter suddenly a Boer farmer riding, magnificently, his long-tailed pony. There is something romantically bold—a figure for adventure—about the horseman. He doffs his sombrero as he approaches, and then leaps lightly to the ground to open our gate—one of the innumerable gates that check the motor every mile or so, and serve to remind us that these interminable wastes, with their vista of unending shrub, have human owners and are harnessed—though the harness may be merely a wire fence—to the service of man. On the train, that great meeting-place for chance acquaintances in South Africa, the Dutchman is likely to prove an agreeable companion. If you show the least desire to learn his views, he will descant upon the stock and crops and appraise the country. Should you know a little of the Taal, so much the better ; he will visibly expand under its influence. The unpardonable sin is to be unresponsive, to wrap yourself in a cloak of silent superiority. It is a common English trait, largely due to shyness, but misunderstood by the Boers, as by other strangers. It is a fair inference, I think, that the Dutch-speaking people court our favourable opinion and are gratified to have it.

Predikants have not exerted to the full the Christianizing and restraining influence that should be theirs. Rather by their pulpit utterances have they inflamed racial animosity. This has been acknowledged even by so consistent and powerful an advocate of Anglo-Dutch friendship as John X. Merriman. It was deeply regrettable, the veteran statesman said to me, in conversation, that the clergy should have adopted this tone. During the Boer war those at the Cape, at all events, exercised a real check upon passions. Perhaps the explanation is a conscious loss of power on the part of the predikant. The new generation does not take as kindly to his ministrations as the old. He is losing his hold. A spirit of enquiry, scientific and sceptical, is abroad, inimical to his authority. As one old Boer expressed it with a simple bitterness hard to convey: " My children now play tennis on Sundays—like the English." This to him was a complete undoing of the old system, a reversal of all the old teaching. They are departing more and more from traditional ways. Dutch ministers feel that and have instinctively adopted methods to meet it. One of them is a perfervid attitude towards Nationalism. This attracts the young bloods, places the minister in the van once more, and satisfies a sincere, if perverted, patriotism. That the pulpit is losing ground amongst the Dutch is, I think, incontrovertible; it is also incontrovertible that the ministry is making great efforts to regain lost ground. It is only human if material considerations mingle with those of the spirit. The predikant is generally well looked after, in a worldly sense, by his flock. His presents are many. The Dutch are generous to their pastors. Chickens and butter and eggs, perhaps a lamb or a goat or two find their way to the minister's Cape cart when he is making a round of visits.

I have pointed to the analogy between Ireland and South Africa. Clerical influences are strong in both cases. And a potent factor is the uneducated mass. Catholic Ireland is illiterate compared with any progressive nation; so is Nationalist South Africa. The greatest force in each is the black ignorance of the peasantry. Hatred, for which there has been ample cause in the past, has been cunningly exploited by the Church. The bitter-enders of Ulster, hard, narrow and bigoted, have their counterpart here—not so much to-day as in the past, of which the Jameson Raid was the culminating outburst. The second Anglo-Boer war should never have been fought. Had a spirit of conciliation, such as Lord Selborne showed during his administration, presided over the Milner-Kruger conference at Bloemfontein, the difficulty of a suspicious and intractable old man meeting a new situation (which threatened to deprive him of his power) might have been overcome. But a narrow and yet intensely shrewd ignorance was met by an unbending spirit, and the result was an explosion. Possibly it was meant to be. Events become too strong for human wills. But here a wrong spirit prevailed and set its seal on destiny. Be that as it may, education is the remedy—for rebel Ireland as for rebel South Africa, perhaps. Men of parts and learning direct the respective Republican movements, but the chief element is not youthful enthusiasm, but age-long rancours and stubborn prejudices.

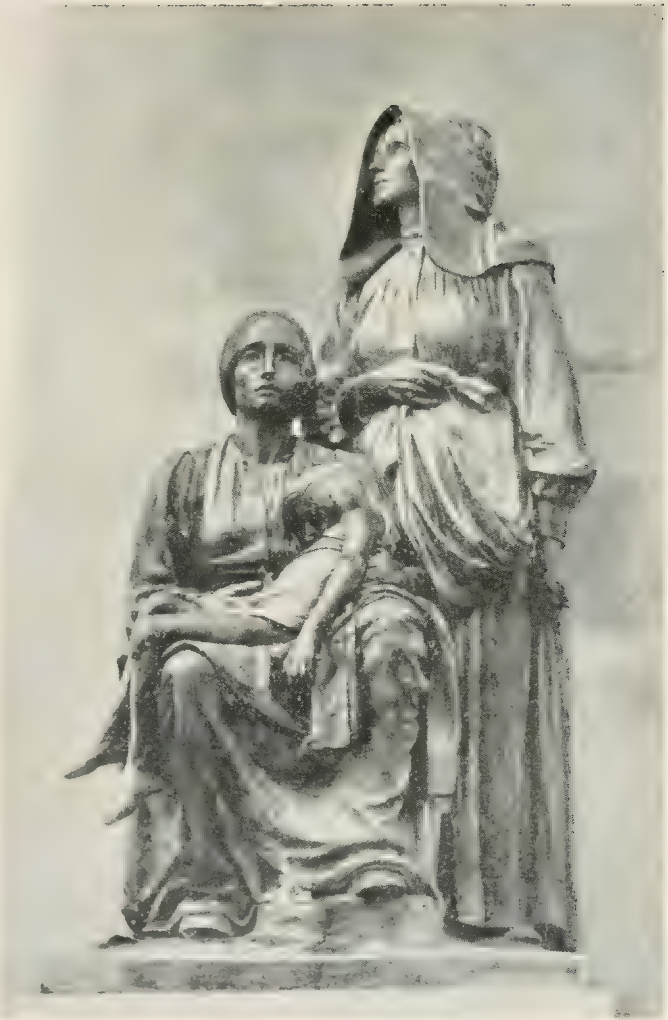
However, in South Africa, at all events, there are signs of a better understanding between the parties, as if they had agreed to differ. What has actually happened is that one has won the day and the other recognizes it—for the moment. Yet before that, at Bloemfontein, a conference assembled in September, 1920, to delimit a ground of accord between the two Dutch parties of Nationalists and the followers of General Smuts. The project of internal peace split, however, on the rock of Separation. Neither would yield on this essential principle. But though the meeting for " hereeniging," as the Dutch word is, broke up without tangible result, the result was, nevertheless, there. The fidelity of the South African Party to the obligations, both explicit and implied, of the Act of Union was not only loyal constitutionally, but as between man and man. Something precious but inexpressible had leaped into the air, diffusing light and reason. In the heat of the discussion affinities had declared themselves. The root reason why there was no agreement to place on record was the consideration of the Dutch members of the South African Party for their British brethren. Nothing should be done, they decided, that could end in their hurt. This was the secret of their resistance to "hereeniging": the fear that British interests and susceptibilities should be slighted and endangered. Not that the Dutch members are not equally set on maintaining the Imperial connection, but they have different ways of expressing it. In principle they are not opposed to the idea of some understanding with the extremists, so as to avoid conflict and waste of effort, if it can come about without prejudice to British feelings and just expectations. The friendliness revealed between Dutch and British members of the South African Party is a very precious gage for the future. Intrinsically there is no reason why there should not be close Anglo-Dutch co-operation in government, based on mutual concession and appreciation of each other's point of view. There is much in common between them both in their Protestantism and in their natural fondness for clean and wholesome sport.

Differences exist in temperament and moral standards; but there is a large ground for understanding, and on no other footing can the political structure of the country be maintained. The dream of racial dominance on one side or the other is as hopeless as it is pernicious. It has not prevented Hertzog and his more extreme colleague, Tielman Roos, from attempting it; but their efforts, if successful, could only result in ruin. Nor could such a solution, even if acquiescence were secured to-day, result in permanence, for to-morrow's influx into South Africa might reverse yesterday's decision to break loose from the British League of

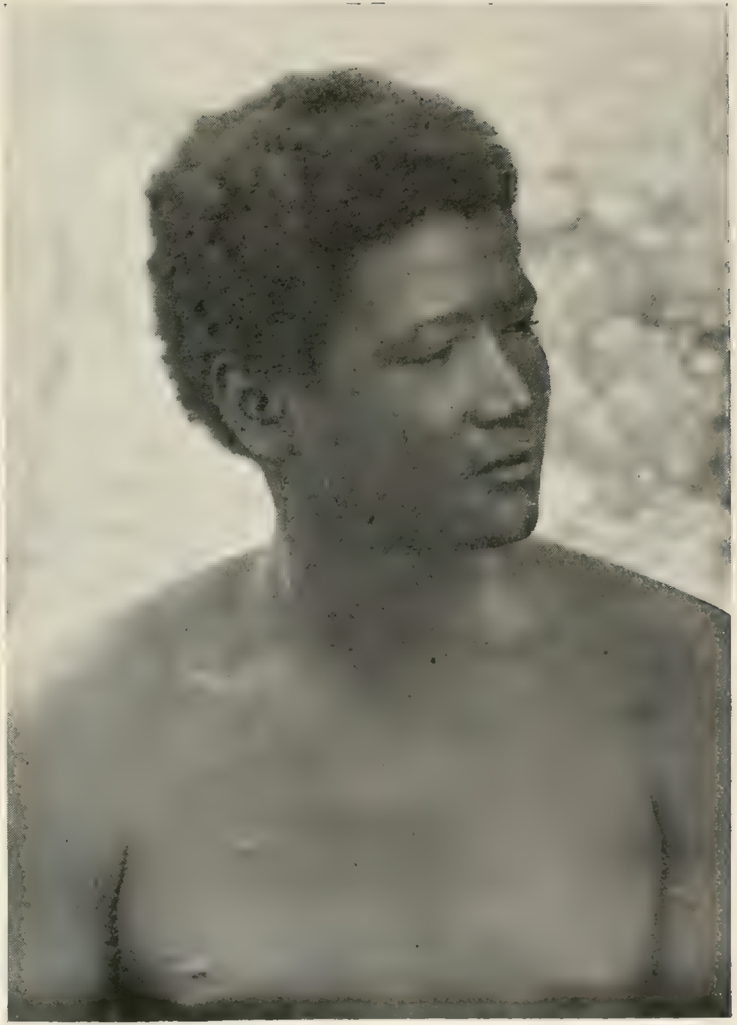
Nations. It must be plain, I think, that any widespread recrudescence of the war fever would place an "independent" South Africa in a position of great peril. It lies open to any powerful and land-hungry foe (as I have insisted elsewhere). Having disregarded the call from Armenia and Korea, the United States could hardly heed that of South Africa. Nor could the Monroe doctrine well be stretched to include the sub-continent. The League is obviously powerless and Great Britain, even if magnanimous, could not offer, logically, protection where her very presence was challenged. It is not difficult to imagine that some formidable Eastern Power might espouse the cause of the Asiatic, the Indian who is denied civic rights and invited to depart after having built up the prosperity of Natal's sugar industry. The day the British fleet steamed away, another and a hostile one might enter Table Bay. Having found how good the land was, no force available in South Africa would be able to dislodge it. But General Hertzog has no fears of such an invasion. Such was the upshot of his remarks to me in the historic interview I record in these pages. "For," he says, "if it is worth a Power's while to invade South Africa for what it can get out of it, it is worth another Power's while to prevent it." This has truth in it, but is, none the less, a doubtful consolation to those who should see their country become a cockpit for contending armies and civilizations. Better, one would suppose, the quieter policy of retaining what one has than of leaping out to the might-have-been, the kind of liberty that never was on sea or land. For it seems to many moderate persons that South Africa enjoys all the freedom possible or customary in free communities, together with the security of the Imperial connection, the readiness of the fleet to protect, if need be, the menaced shores. For nothing is more obvious than the complete autonomy of South Africa, which extends to all matters affecting her interests abroad. Thus, the appointment of Prince Arthur of Connaught to be Governor-General was made at the express wish of the South African Cabinet, just as the King, on the advice of his Canadian Ministers, will appoint the new Canadian diplomat at Washington, or Australia's High Commissioner. It is difficult to conceive of a liberty more complete.

Perhaps the best solution for Nationalism (as, indeed, for Sinn Fein) would be to entrust it with power. The full nakedness of its pretensions would then be revealed. Its crass incompetence and airy irresponsibility would no longer delude anybody. The saving clause is the sound decency of the Dutch, and their valour as shown on the stricken field. Thousands fought side by side with our own people. It was a wonderful result, after what had happened fifteen years before—a tribute to the good faith of two peoples, to the respect inspired by the stronger, to the nobility of the weaker. Superb was the attitude of the mass of Dutch people and of their leaders. Generals Botha and Smuts, greatly impressed Lord Buxton, the Governor-General, during this interesting and momentous time. It seemed to him a striking example of the worth of the Dutch people, of their intrinsic loyalty, of their willingness to let bygones be bygones in the interests of South Africa and a larger humanity. Because of this loyalty and generosity in the Dutch nature, there is a greater disposition, perhaps out of sheer contrast, to stress the unworthy action of some who treat the obligations they have entered into in the Act of Union as a " scrap of paper."

" The present leaders of the Nationalists gave repeated and explicit assurance of their whole-hearted acceptance of the British connection. In the absence of such assurance" (says the Johannesburg *Star*, commenting on the Bloemfontein Conference), " Union would have been impossible. This fact is historic, beyond dispute. Bloemfontein failed because the Nationalists were adamant on the point that the South African Party must break with their English-speaking members and accept, as the price of reunion, ultimate independence as the common ideal and aim. . . . And yet some good has emerged even from an attempt to oust Smuts from the leadership of his party and from the direction of affairs. The plot failed because of the loyalty of the Dutch-speaking colleagues. It was one more proof that the two peoples are destined to understand one another." This spirit of comradeship between the two races also augured well for the success of Prince Arthur's mission, which had the same basis for its being—the faith and goodwill of the Dutch and English—as the Act of Union itself. It is not extraordinary that many Nationalists should be unable to forget—especially at Bloemfontein, where exists the monument commemorating the deaths of women and children in the concentration camps. The tale of the dead recorded is 26,370, a melancholy host, truly. Whatever we may say about the advisability of retaining such a reminder, there it is, in imperishable stone and bronze, the more powerful in its evocation because of the talent and sincerity of the sculptor. The fact it commemorates lies at the root of the hostility of Dutch women. They cannot forget—even at this distance of years—that their own babies perished. I am not suggesting that in the great majority of cases every precaution was not taken ; but a death roll is difficult to conjure away. Yet is it not curious ? Some of the bitterest are not those who have suffered most at our hands. The old Boers who fought most sturdily against us are not infrequently our staunchest friends. " No," they say, frankly, " we have had enough. We fought and lost, and we rest content with our position to-day." And by a coincidence which at least is significant, precisely



MONUMENT OF CONCENTRATION CAMPS



OVAMBO YOUNG MAN

those men who fought most faithfully in the field and endured all the wearying vicissitudes of a protracted campaign are to-day the trusty and reliable leaders of the people, far the most reconciled to the flag. Those, on the contrary, whose hearts failed them at various points in the tragedy, have crept into the Nationalist camp and now raise derisive shouts to prove their valour—when the danger is no longer near.

And, finally, the situation as between Briton and Boer must be left to the kindly solvent of time, which cannot but improve the chances of a perfect reconciliation. I am not of those who believe that in a blood struggle will be found the peace, but rather in that spirit of compromise, which so often possesses our people. As to whether that solution spells greater or less strength to the connection—that must be left to the inscrutable course of events. But a strong South Africa is almost bound to come.

## V

## THE GOLD CITY

ENTERING Johannesburg as I did in the dusk of a threatened thunderstorm, the effect of the great white dumps thrown up by the mines was weird in the extreme. I seemed to have come upon a city of ghosts haunted with prodigious shapes. These white mountains seemed to hem one in, to crush the spirit by their massive suggestion of mysterious melancholy. Lights shone on the tops of these mountains ; tiny figures moved, adding fresh material out of tiny trucks to the wilderness of waste. It was eerie, like a graveyard of hopes, like a place of skulls in a desert, bleached white by the pitiless sun. The way to Johannesburg is marked with these heaps : monuments to the ceaseless effort to extract gold from the Reef ; and tall chimneys and revolving wheels, winding and unwinding on the top of high staging, are the signs and symbols of the modern gold-seeker. Some day the rock that has passed by the stamps and now has no gold in it—which is the body of the mountain —will become sufficiently disintegrated to form soil in which vegetables will grow ! Prosaic end to so much glory—fabulous wealth descending to a cabbage patch ! But for the nonce it is white and staring, as blank and desolate as a shroud.

I had heard of the dumps, as everyone has, but did not expect to see such towering creations. Then the thunder shower fell and the white walls looked grey and grisly in the gloom. An hour after, the sky had cleared, and evening fell. Out in the streets I was caught by the animation, the feverish, hectic haste of everything. The city's traffic recalls Broadway or the Strand. In the streets pass, seemingly, the motors of the world. The activity is the more remarkable in that, thirty years ago, there was practically nothing here but a few tin huts and tents and shanties. From a mining village, dumped on the veld, it has grown in the short space of a generation into a populous city with handsome business thoroughfares, clanging tramways and all the appurtenances of a high civilization. It contrasts greatly with Kimberley, with Durban, with Cape Town, with all the other towns I ever knew. It has a character of its own and that sort of poetry in action which belongs to a people keyed to business and pleasure. It is pleasure now—the unconscious charm of people living life to the full, intent upon the quivering emotions of an hour. What a city of sensations ! Here under the arc lamps of the Great White Way of Commissioner Street the throng passes. It is in the full flood of Show Week. The place is crowded. No space anywhere. I sleep in the annexe of an old hotel—one of the earliest, I suspect, to rise from the huts and tents. An old savage with woolly locks braided—like an old mat which is becoming threadbare—brought me each day my morning cup of suspicious hue, which he thrust at me with the air of one performing a regretful duty and making haste to do it. It kept my eye quivering for the rest of the day. Outside in the streets, along the colonnade—the Rue de Rivoli or Pantiles of Johannesburg—the world saunters, hatless, gaily insouciant. Its clothes have the lightsome look of people bent on speeding the hour with the grace of carelessness. There is no programme of set enjoyments before them. They are not greatly trying to amuse themselves, after the British way, bustling and rustling into theatres, laying siege to trams, bombarding the Underground. Their movements are void of strenuousness. They are not haunted and harried by "the plan," for they have no plan at all. Idly they follow the dictates of a fancy. It may take them to the pictures, into a club, where the sexes mingle; perhaps to a teashop where iced cake is served and sugared delicacies, the while the world in London still weighs and measures the product as if it were grains of gold. Those teashops, after the theatre, with their strumming orchestras and beautiful young people, are one of the features of the Gold Reef City. Six thousand feet above the sea, the air is so stimulating that strong hearts are affected and must descend, to save themselves, to lower levels. But the strange thing is that hearts already weakened are strengthened in this vigorous clime as if the additional strain upon the organ braced it to meet new demands. Fever is in the blood. In laying the foundation-stone of the Medical Faculty of the Witwatersrand University College, Lord Buxton, the then Governor-General, in a jocular speech insisted on the Rand's need for a soporific.

"Something always happens here. Every six months or so there is a flare-up," says the resident to the stranger. It is almost a point of honour that there should be; otherwise the Rand would lose its reputation for being the most restless centre in South Africa. And, being so, it provides for restless nerves a round of pleasure such as the other centres with their calmer and more lethargic nature do not know. One of the chief of them is the Sunday concert at the clubs. I was astonished to find a parson there listening with visible delight to the songs and orchestral pieces of the programme. And his wife, I judged, found no evil in the racing which had filled the Saturday half-day. When it came to drinks, there was my friend in broadcoth claiming the right to pay and to replenish the glasses from a good Scottish still. His wife, the while, chatted of the racing and showed, I thought, first-hand knowledge of the odds. How acquired I did not dare to ask, though it would have been scarcely resented. Here is the freedom that exists under a Colonial sky! Sunday concerts with appreciative crowds listening to the best talent in the city are as characteristic as the fact that they are held in political clubs. These institutions are peculiar to the Rand. Men and women are admitted on equal terms. The subscription is small, the comforts those of ordinary clubs. I think the presence of women is a deterrent against excessive drinking which is, I judge, one of the peculiar temptations of this " elevated " town. The keen and vivifying atmosphere seems to demand fuel from stoppered bottles every few hours or so.

The clubs have their rôle to play in election times, and the women, though unenfranchised, throw themselves into it with great enthusiasm. At least the clubs serve as a rallying ground for the youth of both sexes which would be driven elsewhere—to less advantage to itself—if no such place existed. Everything is here: " soft " or " hard " drinks, and conversation either soft with sentiment (as I suspect may be the case) or hard with politics and electioneering. Life flows agreeably in these broad and airy streets flanked by commercial enterprise represented, alas, as elsewhere, by Corinthian columns set up on the edge of plate glass, giving a Bacchanalian sense of perilous contingencies. Tradesmen, the world over, hanker after the unholy " dickey " and detachable cuff of architecture.

Johannesburg's lights were clouded when I returned to the city after some months of absence. A great change had come. The effect of economized light was cyclopean. The electric standards winked the other eye, not as a sign of gaiety but to save the current! The hotels had reasonable accommodation. I was comfortably lodged, and dined in a restaurant wide-spaced with tables. There was room, too, before the fire, rendered necessary by cold nights and mornings. The rapid changes of temperature is one of the features of the Rand climate. This morning it is many degrees below freezing point, sharp and nipping to the hands and feet, but by noon I shall be glad to seek the shade from the powerful down-slanting sun. You have no time, therefore, to be tired of winter's severities for they are mitigated by the heat of summer before another meal goes by. So you have all the sensations of a change of air without moving from the Rand. The streets at night in this winter season show a great difference from spring gaieties and activities. We have got to the calm of Piccadilly when Parliament is " up," Belgravia shuttered and by the sea, Oxford Street in the hands of swarthy men with picks and vessels filled with tar. Many are out of town—" gone to Durban for the winter," I learn. The aspect of the streets is quite other than at my first visit. That old animation has departed. Gone is the hatless and charmingly attired procession of saunterers under the colonnades and from the large hotels. I notice now that they who walk wear a severely business air as if they had but one thought : to return home the shortest way. It is the workaday air : the remembrance that to-morrow one must return to the making of bread and butter.

Fear comes periodically upon light-hearted " Jo'burg " lest the mines should give out, lest war-time prosperity should disappear with the return to normal of the price of gold. It is the ghost, which presides over every banquet. Low-grade mines will have to close down when there is no premium to support them and thousands of miners and natives will be thrown on the labour market. Yet war gave a great fillip to the gold-mining industry and low-paying properties revelled in good times. This brilliant sun is already obscured—but one need not be tragic about it. The Gold City has survived many crises of the sort and will, doubtless, weather this one. Meanwhile, it wears more readily the mantle of success than the sackcloth of repentance. In this champagne air one can work or play interminably. Energies are doubled, spirits soar to the blue. It is impossible to feel dull or depressed, six thousand feet above the sea, and below ground are incalculable riches. Someone has discovered a new cause for alarm. The Currency Act has come into operation, compelling the mines to pay in paper so as to safeguard the gold. But natives, especially the " boy " from Portuguese East Africa, have little " use " for such a system. He understands only gold and silver. Paper is suspect because he cannot read and does not know its value, and because it is so readily destroyed or lost. Natives do not carry mackintoshes and umbrellas, and in wet weather notes suffer. Such matters cause excitement. Those " voices in the night," to which I allude elsewhere in this book, are heard most plainly in Johannesburg. It is the centre from which agitation springs, principally because here is assembled so great an army of toilers from every native tribe. And their voices are not merely querulous, but seditious as well. Even anarchistic views are expressed by extremists at native meetings held in back rooms in the slums. And the condition of the slums is such that a well-known negrophil, when visiting them recently, declared : " I felt as if I were standing in Hell's gate." From these slums come the cries and groans and imprecations of a people struggling to be free, not so much from white dominance as from themselves, from their own savage past, with all its dreadful and crushing restrictions. Slumdom, too, provides a centre of revolt, a cause of bitterness. The educated native resents the landlordism from which he suffers and the crushing social conditions represented by the lowness of his salary, whereby he is compelled to live in cheap and oftentimes insanitary dwellings, herded with his kind and so forced, by an unkind fate, by the very acuteness of his physical discomfort, to think upon his own situation—tempted, no doubt, to a painful comparison with the superior advantages of the white man.

Be that as it may, Johannesburg is the centre whence radiates all the movements having for their intention the betterment of the black man. An interesting scheme provides recreation for him. On my second visit to the city I saw in operation the first of the " controlled " playgrounds, where little native boys and boys of a strangely mixed parentage were at play at football, upon swings, on parallel bars, and at the " giant's stride," under the kindly guidance of the Rev. Ray Phillips, a very live specimen of American missionary. I should not like to vouch that his side-car keeps always within the limits prescribed by law, when he is upon his soul-saving missions ; I know I came nearer the sensation of flying than in any of my terrestrial experiences. But the modern emissary of the churches, especially the American type, is like that, and full of the zeal that wins success for heaven, as in any earthly pursuit. The controlled playground, the first in South Africa, is, then, the fruit of this endeavour to get at the black man through his recreations. Appropriately, it owes its origin to the Rand, where is gathered together so great a concourse of black labourers. Dr. Bridgman and Mr. Phillips, of the American Board of Missions, who are associated in this work, were induced to undertake it, they told me, because they felt that there was nowhere where black people could meet except in crowded rooms in some back slum. Thus, part of the scheme for their social improvement consists in the construction of a hall where they may gather for conversation and organized amusements. It is typical of Johannesburg that it should devote itself to measures of this kind : daring and unique. For in a provision of the sort you have to overcome prejudice—by no means easy to accomplish.

The city, indeed, has problems of its own connected with the gold-mining industry and the strange population it attracts. Sometimes, for all its civilization and material progress, which it affects and is proud to possess, it goes back frankly to unregenerate days when it was a mining camp—just thirty short years ago. The manners of its population are sometimes reminiscent of those piping and lawless times, when the law of the mines was the law of the good strong arm, and might was right. It is still to-day concerned, I judge, more with the solid things of earth than with the creations of the spirit. There is not much poetry in the methods of Get-Rich-Quick Wallingfords, but it is only just to say that Johannesburg is no longer the abode of millionaires. The greater of the gold magnates have fled, seeking, perchance, easier and more luxurious homes elsewhere, and leaving in their places agents who remit the profits earned in the daily delving for the precious metal. Insensibly, the very lure of the search for gold has undergone a change, due to the evolution of expensive methods in the winning of the "stuff." Manufactories have arisen; farming and stock-raising have assumed a new importance in the country as a whole. Gold is no longer the unchallenged god, ruling remorselessly over the lives and liberties of black men and their white masters.

It is a great experience to descend a mine in the shadow of a white, glistening mass of the rejected rock, from which has been drawn every particle of gold which yields to the process of extraction. Away down into the bowels of the earth we hasten—down, down to unfathomable depths. The bottom of the pit is as far below the surface as Johannesburg the Golden is above the surface of the sea. Down below is the whir of drills pounding and grinding the hard rock to wrest from it its glittering treasure. Into the holes thus forced into the resisting rock are placed charges which shatter and wrench from the reluctant substance fragments which are thrust into tiny trucks and borne, resisting to the last, along a railway pushed by black hands and gleaming black shoulders until they come to the shaft. Here they are pulled to daylight by machinery which seems ever to be raising and lowering during all the hours of the clock. These processes pluck from an ungrateful medium particles of gold, which represent on an average a pennyweight in a ton of worthless debris. This last is tipped upon the mound, which for ever grows like the towering walls of some ant-heap on the plains : the work of an endless chain of human ants each carrying his grain of sand. Melancholy and chastening thought of the individual's unimportance !

The great mine of the Village Deep is like a vast Rock of Gibraltar turned downwards. There are endless passages hewn out of the unyielding rock.

The sensation of descent into the nether world is uncanny in its suddenness. For a moment is established a rough fraternity of men whose badge is the white overall and whose bond is a common risk. I do not know what mine is, but I have signed a paper excusing the Company from any responsibility in that regard ! Down we drop, thousands of feet through a vertical shaft, three or four in each iron section of the cage, until we come to a species of Clapham Junction, where we change into another car. There is a moment's waiting in a little room, from which we signal to a strange vehicle which reminds me of a char-à-banc. Lusty black fellows clamber into seats above my guide and myself, who are in the prow, for our ship is downsloping, as if we were going to charge the darkness at an angle. And so it proves. It is neither char-à-banc nor ship, but a toboggan, slipping down sensationally in the darkness. I am on the " run " at St. Moritz. Those young men who brandish arms and shake lights at us as we go by are fellow sportsmen waiting, I take it, for the up-toboggan. We land, after a few vivid moments, punctuated by those flashing lights at the different levels, on the final floor, six thousand feet below the surface of the city, with its myriad activities. It is one of the deepest mines in the world. In its profound recesses I get an extraordinary feeling of being shut away from the earth. Those black imprisoning walls! A few yards' walk and we come to a tramway system with little trucks upon it. Branching off from this main channel are workings in which I catch glimpses of the miner and his black aides. A pallid personage, the miner looks something of a Weary Willie as he sits upon a projecting spur of rock directing operations while his native " boy " uses the shuddering drill.

Little wagons laden with potential riches, but looking as unlikely as the sugar-cane out of which is produced the refined sweetness of the cup, pass out of shadow into deeper darkness at the other end, beyond the glimmering lights. Those passages are so narrow that my guide and I press ourselves against the walls, holding our lamps to its rocky sides that the lumps of impossible wealth on their iron vehicle may get by, pushed home by stalwart black arms and torses, sweat-polished: gleaming like figures toiling in a relentless Inferno. Slosh, slosh go my feet into the mud and water that lies everywhere along the track.

My guide and I exchange confidences. He is a young man of great promise in mining, professing no great admiration for the type of practitioner that Trade Unionism produces. At the Cape you have the competition of the coloured man, and it is most salutary. It makes for efficiency. Whereas the crassest incompetence shelters behind the colour bar. "That is my view," he said. "The Rand miner is not what he was; he is no longer the pick of the mining world, the most skilful product of the Cornish mines, of California, of Arizona. The poor Dutchman even goes mining nowadays, and brings to it his singular inability to do anything well. That he should be paid eight times as much as his 'boy,' whose experience, perhaps, is superior to his own and whose general intelligence, certainly, is not inferior, is one of the big difficulties we have here."

Meanwhile, I learned that the white boss who was directing the drilling was earning close upon a hundred pounds a month. "How does he spend it ?" I asked, and was given a lurid picture of some miners' delights. In the slums, missionaries told me later, one of the difficulties of Gospel work was the habits of some whites, who debauch coloured and native girls. "Yet it would be wrong to generalize," warned an old Rand resident whom I consulted. "All miners do not spend their huge earnings viciously but, rather, invest them wisely." And he told a story. One day the manager of one of the chief mines was warned of the visit of a shareholder. He decided to offer him the best lunch possible, and his wife wore her most becoming frock. Over lunch, amidst its fine silver and flowers, the hostess made the discovery—long since patent to the officials who had shown him over the mines—that he was a special type of investor. His face seemed familiar to the host. "Surely I have seen you before ?" he questioned. "That's right," the other replied. "I was blacksmith in the repair shop on this mine until a few years ago." The wife managed to recover her equanimity before the champagne was served, but the ex-smith hardly needed the stimulant to enjoy thoroughly the situation.

From my languid miner and his active helpers we passed to others, peering up at them out of shadow-land as they bent at their work. The system is to mine the "stuff" above the tramway line, upon which it is shot and thence conveyed by skips up the inclined plane and through the vertical shaft to the upper air where it goes through all the processes of separation. As we proceed along the gallery with its passing trucks we come to a dead end, where a new working is going forward. I begin to feel uncomfortably warm and to wish that I could revert, without scandal, to the costume of my remote ancestors, who wandered about Britain garbed in woad. The atmosphere was stifling. " Wait until the drills begin," counselled my guide, " it will be cooler then." And so it proved. When the noise of metal crashing its way into rock arose, the vibrated air blew upon the cheek. It was like the noise of quick-firing guns—impossible to hear oneself speak.

Up in the fresh air again. How grateful it seems! How eminently foolish to pass one's time in such a dungeon in an absurd quest for gold! I fear that is not the spirit to earn dividends. It would be frowned upon at a Directors' meeting. How vastly to be preferred to these black ante-chambers of death is this beautiful garden with its quick hedgerow. Peace is within. Along with the white napery of a charming dining-room go the flowers of Spring, snowdrops and violets. I had never before sensed their full beauty, their subtle and yet powerful suggestion of the Spring. Those who sat about the board gave rein to the spirit of the surroundings. It was no longer gold, overhead charges, the high cost of all mining supplies, but the quiet beauty of the poets, the vision and clarity of great minds, the message of the masters, whether in tone or in rhythmic prose—things of the soul, singularly satisfying after the earthly dross that I seemed to have put away in the changing house with its grateful coffee and the no less grateful soap and water. The conversation soothed and refreshed after the sensations of a nether world given over to gold. In imagination, I still heard the whistles out of the peopled darkness, the hoarse barks of overseers, the speeding up of native labour, the clang of signal bells, the rush downward and upward into air again of the never-ceasing cage.

Another day I had a new experience in the Crown Mine, situated like the other, beneath one's feet in the Gold Reef City. Here was a great organization: locomotives with trucks behind, loaded with rock with its percentage of gold, running in tunnels almost as broad and well-lighted as the Underground system in London. And the wonder of it was that on each level there was a similar running of electric services. Clang! Clang! We have just time to get out of the way before there glides into sight, coming from a distance that might be two miles away, a line of trucks drawn by an electric motor. It halts near by and I see the process of discharging the trucks over a grating. The stuff falls into skips that presently will be hauled to the mine's mouth and there dealt with by the crushing plant. I am interested, too, not merely in this extraordinary activity below ground, these veritable trains—and not single trucks—running in galleries hewn from the rock, but in the water system whereby the water circulates, clarifies itself, and circulates again for the purposes of the mine. But I marvel at the absence of the props which some acquaintance with coal mining made me look for. Here it exists nowhere—the rock upholds the immense weight above. Only here and there is a little timbering and packing necessary to buttress the roof.

Marvellous Johannesburg, city of sensations! Could I recall its riots and revolver shots, its political tumults and racial explosions, its wild scenes of speculation—all the madness of pioneer days—even, then, I should present but faintly the tremors of its pulsing vitality.

# VI

# BLACK AND WHITE

THE burning problem in South Africa is the black man. Fussy and important people in the Cape Parliament give a wholly fictitious importance to racial questions as between the Dutch and British. But, in reality, they hardly exist—the burning topic is the progress and development of the black man and his relationship to the whites. It is easy to see how in a nation like South Africa, where the black man outnumbers the white in the proportion of three or four to one, the footing upon which black and white live is of primordial importance. The white population is merely the fringe—and if the fringe of the so-called aristocracy ceases to be superior, then the relationship between the two races must radically change. Values are altered. There cannot be a breach made in the wall of white predominance without endangering the whole fabric of civilization in the sub-continent. The whites are the custodians of civilization. Nothing is more apparent than the dependence of the black upon the white, mainly because the black has been penetrated with something of the ambition, and something of the desire of the white.

On the other hand, it can be said with equal truth that the white man is largely dependent upon the black for the carrying out of his great projects and enterprises. Industrial life would come to a standstill if there were no black or coloured labour. And the black is extraordinarily adaptable, and far more intelligent, far more observant of the failings and weaknesses of his masters than is commonly supposed. Within that woolly pate of his he is thinking in a crude and unformed way —watching like a cat regards a mouse. Agencies, social and religious, are at work educating him. You and I are educating him in our daily contact with him. What is the effect of it all ? I confess that I was alarmed and not a little disappointed to hear on all sides during my journeyings in South Africa that the black man was not the dear, good, simple soul that he used to be ; that he had fallen from grace ; that he was no longer loyal, devoted, industrious, dog-like in his affection and fidelity. He had become crafty, lazy, a shirker, seeking wages without troubling about what he did for them—in fact that he had become contaminated. And the sorrow of it was that these sins were laid, if you please, at the doors of the mission stations. They were accused of turning the simple black man from a humble, faithful toiler into some species of arrogant, uncivilized incompetent.

There is never smoke without fire, and when people talk like that all over the country : farmers, employers of labour, the common man, almost everybody—just a tiny residue of enlightened folk hold the fort for the man of God, but they are very few—then, as an impartial investigator one has to give weight to these utterances. But not undue weight. That is the point. Well, then, what is the matter ? Has the black man been wrongly taught ? It would take long to examine this point. I should have to ask the reader to accompany me to the various mission stations that I have visited, and to see for himself. Here is one station where the black man is being prepared for a working man's career. It is run by German Trappists, and is known as the Marianhill Mission. The principles of labour are inculcated into the native ; he is taught to be practical, to work at trades, to become a saddler or a bootmaker, in which trade, by the way, the native excels; to become a painter, a glazier, a carpenter and a photographer—a dozen and one things that mean money and competence and added self-respect. He is taught the work of the tinsmith, of the tanner, of the wheelwright, the cabinet maker.

The idea is surely excellent. The results of it are seen in sound native work. Now, the great outstanding difficulty is that in educating the native along purely European lines you root out his natural talent and put something in its place which is often but imperfectly assimilated. It is ridiculous to suppose that the rank and file of the black population can absorb the culture of the white man and profit by it without going through some preparatory period. There must be degrees in this advancement, stages in his refining processes. Civilization, as we know it, imperfect instrument that it is, must be altered and adapted. It must be made to fit. The tragedy of it is that when exceptional natives become endowed with all the intellectual equipment of the West, there is nothing for them to do. They are not accepted in white society on terms of equality; they can find no outlet for their talents.

I have heard many painful stories of the danger of educating the black man when prejudice and a definite colour bar shut him out from all practice of his acquisitions. There are limited positions for him, no doubt, in the native Church, but they are soon filled, for the negro, especially the Zulu, is gifted with rare eloquence. He has that divine flow of soul which enables him to communicate his ideas to his fellows with wealth of metaphor and a facility of phrase astonishing to those who have but a superficial acquaintance with his abilities and instinctive art of self-expression. Again, it is difficult for the handicraftsman to get a place, owing to the laws and regulations which shut him in. If a black artisan began work on a building as a bricklayer, or performed any of the other operations of a trained mechanic, his appearance would be the signal for the departure of the white hands. The black man, trained in the practical arts and crafts of the white man, can only betake himself to the country away from the large centres of population. Farmers on isolated farms often employ black or coloured labour in the erection of houses, and in doing constructive work of that kind. This, of course, applies to South Africa other than Cape Colony, where there is no colour bar.

Anyone with the least observation can see that the black man is daily rising in the scale of competence. He is becoming more efficient. Often in highly technical trades such as electric lighting, he will do the responsible work—fixing of the wire, for instance—whilst the white linesman is below merely looking on or lazily directing his aide. He is doing highly trained work at a fraction of the wage paid to the other. Such incongruity is even more glaring in the mines. A day or two before I arrived at Kimberley, a large deputation of native "boys" had gone to a Diamond director to complain of working conditions. "*We* are the miners," they said, when he mentioned the charges that the industry has, increasingly, to bear; "why do you keep the others on?" In his heart, the director knew the "boys" were right, but he could only explain that it was necessary for the operation of the mines to have bosses and underlings: big bosses like himself, and little bosses like the overseers and white miners.

It is certain that the feeling of the black man that he is being exploited is at the back of much of the effervescence on the Rand to-day. It is a feeling that grows daily stronger and who shall blame him for it when it is so largely true? The whites make fortunes on his broad and shining back, and give him a miserable pittance in return. "But," you say, "his wants are so few." That is true, but not wholly true, for, educated or not, he shows a disposition to rise in the scale by wearing clothes which are increasingly expensive. The negro " dude," dressed in his Sunday best, is an impressive example of expenditure by a native purse, even if the sartorial effect is droll to the last degree. But, laugh not, for there is nothing that antagonizes the two races more than the ridicule so often indulged in by persons of poor taste. And they are poor patriots for they do white domination much disservice.

It would take us very far to discuss in all its bearings this agonizing question of racial self-consciousness. I confess I cannot do it within the limits of a chapter ; it would require a book to itself. But I may point at least to some directions in which the black man suffers, and some directions in which a remedy may be applied. The black man suffers, economically, without a doubt. His wages have not kept pace with the monstrous rise in the cost of his simple necessaries which has followed the war. Mealie meal, which used to be about 15s. a bag, rose to treble that amount. Clothes, as everyone knows, soared to incredible figures. How is the agricultural labourer, on his 30s. a month, to provide for his family out of any surplus that may remain after paying for his clothes and for his blankets ? Of course, the farm hand has many extras. He is fed and may receive little presents in kind, which enlarge his wages. But such remuneration, whether in kind or in hard cash, has not kept pace with the advance in market prices. And he feels aggrieved.

When the agitator, black or white, comes along, Sambo falls a prey to his flow of language and his lurid pictures of black grievances. Possibly, like the Irishman and all persons of explosive temperament, he enjoys his grievances, but they are none the less real. What are they ? Undoubtedly, the feeling of neglect comes uppermost. He thinks that no one cares for him any more. In the old days that was not so. Twenty or thirty years ago Merriman, Sauer and Maurice Evans interested themselves in his lot. But then an interval occurred : a stale and stagnant interregnum in which nothing was done. It lasted until General Smuts, in the course of 1920, introduced the Native Affairs Bill, in a magnificent speech which showed how near to his heart was the duty of satisfying the aspirations of these sons of Africa. He displayed intuition, and an unwonted perception of the black man's point of view in that masterly address. Even the Act of Union had a certain bad effect on the prospects of the black man, for there was quashed an interesting attempt to do him justice. This was a commission, permanent and disinterested in character, set up by the last Natal Government before Union, which kept watch over his interests and heard his complaints. When the institution had just got into its stride, the Act of Union came, and there was an end of it!

And so the cause languished for want of champions, and the black man has been feeling very sorry for himself ever since. Now he has plucked up heart again because of the provision in the Bill for Native Councils, and for a Commission of white experts in sympathy with his ambitions and for the assemblage of chiefs and other representative persons who will meet whenever a piece of native legislation has to be considered.

In addition to a sense of neglect, the native has had real reason for thinking himself exploited in the price of things. Does he wish to buy any little article that represents to him either finery or comfort, he has to pay treble for it—perhaps even more. The exploitation of natives by astute and avaricious storekeepers, generally of the Jewish persuasion, has contributed very greatly to his present state of mind. He feels he is being victimized, and he does not know what to do about it because he has no proper channel of protest. Hitherto, there have been only the native papers or the quartette of senators chosen for their knowledge of his affairs, though naturally he was uncertain which way they would vote!

When the Native Affairs Bill had passed its second reading, I asked the son of a Zulu chief what he thought of the measure. He began by saying that the proposed council would be, as he phrased it, " very nice." Then he touched on the grievances of his race. He said that the incompleteness of native education was the real reason why it was so much criticized. If only education were better, if only it were fuller, then those who received it would be better able to resist evil counsel. Quaintly, he likened those who had received a little education to potatoes put into a pot to boil. If they were withdrawn too soon, so much good food was spoiled. The potatoes were sodden—worse than useless; but if they were well cooked, then they were nourishing to eat. It was so with the black man's education. If he were well educated, he became a force to the State and a credit to his race; but half-educated, quarter-educated, he was just spoiled. " We need guidance," he said, gazing for a moment at his yellow shoes. " We have sat too long in darkness. We have none to uplift us—no books, no great teachers. We look to the white man to be our friend and helper, but often he is not. He is busy with his own affairs, and does not heed us. He is no longer our father, and is harsh and grasping with us."

He said that not only educationally, but in economic matters as well, the black man was suffering from disabilities. He was inadequately paid, and could not obtain even the poor articles he required—his beads and blankets and pots and pans—because they had so greatly increased in price. Farmers were hard with their " boys," and it was difficult for them to live and send money to their wives and families. Then, too, the town " boys " were often in need of money to buy clothes ; they were not paid sufficiently. He spoke in a tone of disillusionment. The race, he said, was being exploited, and had no opportunity of rising.

How far can the black man rise ? How far is he the equal or in what degree can he obtain equality with the superior race ? It is difficult to say. What may be asserted confidently is that some black men can rise to considerable heights. There is a Zulu lawyer in Johannesburg, highly gifted, much esteemed for his character and accomplishments. His race is a bar to his further progress probably, but within the limits of the possible he has become famous. Mr. Jabavu, professor of the Bantu languages at the native college of Fort Hare, Cape Colony—one of the leaders of the black men to-day—is a B.A. of London University, an excellent pianist and violinist, and generally cultured.

At Amanzimtoti Mission he came a while ago, delivering an address and exciting the utmost enthusiasm amongst his hearers, who regarded him as a champion of their race. He is their banner-man, showing to what heights the black man can proceed. And yet he has not lost his head. At Amanzimtoti I listened to a discussion on community work furnished by the black teachers of the different native schools assembled in winter session to hear lectures on methods of work whereby they could become more efficient and secure better results. The sharpest point in the discussion was reached when native dancing was broached. The lecturer, a young American missionary, working amongst the black elements at Johannesburg, propounded the theory that the Zulu dance at marriages was immoral, because it contained suggestions which were impure.

That was a torch applied to inflammable material. Why was it impure ? Who said that it conveyed suggestion of an improper character ? It did not do so to the native. Was the European waltz impure ? Should that be substituted for the other ? " No, certainly not," said a clergyman present, with much heat. He did not altogether convince his hearers, who were inclined to argue the point. But this European waltz—were there not schools to teach it? Did not white parents send their children to them? Did they, then, send them to improper places? And so the battle waged. I was astounded at the spirit shown. It was not in the least submissive. If I had been a perfect stranger to the black man and to missionary efforts in South Africa, I should have been inclined to believe that the missionaries had laboured in vain, that they had succeeded only in stirring up a feeling of revolt in the breasts of their nominal disciples. As it was, I was to some extent forewarned for I had heard a great deal of a discussion the day before, in which speakers had urged that the black man was unfairly treated, that he had not had a chance for the full development of his powers.

It is only too apparent that the native no longer believes in the fairness, justice and impartialty of the white man. He is prepared to challenge them at every step. The politician has not impressed the native with the purity of his aims and intentions. Men like Van Hees, one of the more outspoken of the Dutch section in Parliament, has not hesitated to say bluntly: " A fig for your justice to the black man. What we want is justice to ourselves. Justice for the whites every time." So coarse and brutal were his allusions to the inferior brother that the Basutos in "Pitso" passed a resolution against them as an insult to their people. (The resolution, however, was afterwards withdrawn.) But it is an ill wind that blows nobody any good, and these frank utterances have given the native races of South Africa an excellent idea of the sentiments of the Nationalist Dutch, in their regard, whereby the ends of moderation and sanity in politics are served.

Moreover, it has visibly strengthened those who say that a Republic would work harm to native interests. It is clear that the unenlightened Dutch have no sympathy with the desire of the black man for a larger share in life. And, again, the disgust evoked by these utterances in the breast of the negro has changed for the worse his attitude and sentiments towards the white races, Dutch and British, throughout the Provinces. That was inevitable. In addition to this distrust, which has become general, I remark also a growing touchiness and sensitiveness to the least criticism on the part of the Zulus. They are in the painful transition stage from barbarism to at least a semi-civilization. They resent remarks which seem to reflect upon their capacity to govern themselves. Yet representative black men will tell you that the nation is still in childhood and still needs a careful, fatherly hand.

Now in these discussions one remarked that there was a conflict of ideals. Some Zulu speakers declared with great fervour their pride in their own nationality. It rejoiced them to feel that they were members of the Zulu race and then, almost in the same breath, you heard their sighs and felt they were hankering after becoming white. As I listened to these speeches, I reflected on the danger of a little learning to a semi-civilized race. Many of the types before me showed the disadvantages, in a physical sense, of the studious habit. Some of the girls were round-shouldered and stooped, wore dark-green spectacles over their weakened eyes, had decayed teeth and flat feet. The men showed similar symptoms. Outside, in the glorious sunshine, along the road which dipped into the valleys and rose to the tops of the hills of this delightful region, I saw the " unspoiled " native, erect as a dart, moving with freedom and dignity along the path. The man was carrying the inevitable two sticks in his hand, holding them as if to guard the woman with him from possible foes. This, indeed, is the origin of the black man carrying sticks and leaving to his wife the burden. Having his hands free, he is able to defend her from the dangers of the forest and the highway, be they snakes or tigers or in human form. She carried a bottle of oil upon her head, beautifully poised on a perfect neck and shoulders ; a picture of natural grace, and her walk was the walk of a goddess. To see a group of native women stand at the corner of a street in Durban is to get an impression of perfect bronze figures. I doubt if upon the London stage ballet dancers show such beauty and rhythm in their carriage.

What a contrast between this child of nature, apparently so blithe, moving like a gazelle with no thought for to-morrow and nothing to pucker her brows—and this stooping product of the schoolroom, gauche and unhappy-looking, already with a grouch against the world. I was never more struck with the disadvantages of our so-called education (so entirely bookish and unpractical) as in seeing the members of a teachers' conference take the train to return to their different homes. Their emotion and confusion of mind at being confronted with the little problems of railway travel were amusing, if pathetic, to watch. They ran hither and thither like sheep driven by an impatient dog, and were loud in their appeals to their white cicerones. " I have grown grey-headed trying to put them in the right trains," remarked a harassed official.

And yet, of course, one must not over-emphasize a weakness of this sort or let it discourage us from doing well. There are many lovely characters being formed and strengthened and enriched under education just as, alas ! there are many simple-minded souls who are being warped from their original usefulness into something that is preposterous in its conceit, ill-nourished by its intellectual diet, and out of tune with its surroundings. It is impossible not to feel that they are often wrongly taught. Civilization fails to make the right kind of impression upon their minds. It is so often counterfeit. The dusky teachers of dusky children so very rarely have pride in the beautiful, wild things of their early evolution. Anything primitive and just simply dignified seems to recall subjection and little else. They see nothing in the sheen of the body and limbs of the black man ; they see only that he is partially naked and should be respectablized with all the costly appurtenances of civilization—the collar and coat, the boots and the braces. Someone essayed to call their respectful and reverent attention to the loveliness of the Discobolos, but they saw no beauty in these imperishably perfect lines. To them the actress, with her set smile, her shining dentistry and modern finery is far more worthy of homage. Vulgar display is to them the very acme of the admirable. For all their book-learning and smattering of philosophy, they are still as children in their comprehension of life.

Education is a vast, distracting problem. It grows greater every day, every hour. The missionaries march ahead ; the pupils follow and manage, sometimes, to precede them. The pace is startling. No race on the earth has shot forward with the velocity of the Zulus. The oldest missions date back but eighty years. Most of the progress to be noted has been made in sixty years. In that short period in a nation's evolution, the native has passed from the rudest sort of agriculture, which merely scratched the soil, to something that at least bears some semblance to scientific farming. If, however, it is generally true that agriculture is very backward in native locations, the reason is not far to seek. It is a fact that the native uses some kind of plough to turn up the soil, generally with the aid of oxen or mules. This is an advance upon the pronged hoe, which was his only implement, a few years ago. None the less, as a farmer he is not a success. One reason is that he leaves his women folk to do the planting and hoeing

ZULU BASKET BALL

NATIVE BOYS

and the other operations of cultivation. He, himself, has gained science from his white master, but the women have remained at home and have not had this opportunity. And, judged from European standards, the native is a lazy man, caring little to exert himself, and preferring to profit by the labour of his wives.

Yet, progress is rapid along certain lines—so rapid as to be almost frightening. One wonders where it will end, for its manifestations are already strange, affording amusement to some and food for serious thought to others. As an instance, one might mention the tennis clubs, composed of black boys and girls, who now challenge each other in many of the native centres. There is a growing addiction to sports on the part of the black man. There are native football clubs. Black boys play the game a good deal. They have not yet attempted cricket, but are anxious, I believe, to experiment in that ancient and truly British game. In other directions, too, they show a growing desire for the delights of the white community.

In addressing teachers of either sex, the visitor has to be very careful not to offend. " Boys and girls " will no longer do as a form of address. " Ladies and Gentlemen " is a mode that is coming to be recognized, though reluctantly, by the white inspectors of schools. This, again, is a sign of growing self-consciousness. If one had the time and disposition, there is a volume to be written on this subject. Perhaps it is more profitable to turn to the question of Government ownership of the native schools, which means that the missionaries would be free to give their attention, purely, to spiritual teaching or to equipping the native as a wage-earner or a man gaining his livelihood by farming or the cultivation of native arts and crafts. The difficulty is money. There are no funds available for taking over the schools. A certain group of schools—very few in fact—have been placed under the Education Department, but the formal inauguration of a system, which must end in compulsory education for the black races, awaits a future day. It needs no stretch of imagination to picture some of the results of universal education. Missionaries of the forward-looking sort say: "Give the black man his chance and you will be astonished at the result." Perhaps they are right.

Yet my stay in South Africa has enabled me to see some of the disadvantages of the instruction already given to the black scholar. As I have said above, it is so purely intellectual—too much bookwork and not enough handiwork. What is needed is to turn out men and women capable of advancing their own fortunes and those of their native land—not merely semi-educated and wholly discontented creatures clamouring for clerical employment. Yet this is, inevitably, the trend of the black man's education. It is concerned with books and has all the defects of the bookish system. Indeed the native consents reluctantly to receive any instruction which is not based on books. Books made the white man's success, he says, and books will make his. The fact that one can read works of philosophy and can exercise his ingenuity in mathematical problems seems to the untutored mind of the savage of yesterday to be the real secret of superiority. And so he says, when any attempt is made to wean him from this over-intellectualized ideal: "It is good enough for the white man, therefore it must be good enough for me."

This was particularly noticeable when the parents of black children who were being entered for matriculation, were advised to drop some of the subjects and to adopt others of a more practical nature. The suspicious parent at once enquired what the white children were doing, and when he had received the answer, he was more than ever determined that his own child should receive the same "useless" instruction. Latin and French have been turned out of the black man's curriculum with the greatest difficulty. His ambition plainly confessed or but imperfectly concealed, is to raise his children from the ranks of manual labour. Coloured or not, hardly emerged from barbarism or not, they must be given the same chance as the white children. It is a curious and painful position, complicated by the very varied character of the instruction obtained by the black man.

Kraal influences are set against the daughter of the house emancipating herself by becoming educated. Educated, she is of less value to her husband—so the old savage, her father, believes. She has thoughts above weeding in the broiling sun, and she does not want to spend the end of the day brooding over a pot in which the mealie meal is being cooked. In fact, she wants to think for herself. Notions of emancipation, of marrying one man who will devote himself to her comfort and protection, flit through her woolly head and make her extremely rebellious from following the wont of her tribe and becoming the concubine of the first man who can offer sufficient cattle to her father for the privilege of possessing her and her labour.

Feminism grows—even in the unlikely atmosphere of the native kraal. It grows in spite of difficulties. There is now a movement to give training to the black girl that she may become a better wife and mother. This training would also mean that she would become a better servant. For the moment, few native girls go out to service; their fathers object to it on the very sensible ground that they are not looked after by their mistresses, and that after their day's work they run about the town and frequently fall into bad company. Thereupon rises the need of a hostel where these daughters may be trained in the arts of the household, learning plain cooking, sewing and housework generally. This is explained in another chapter. The effect of this would be highly interesting, for it would enable the male native to return to the land, which he has quitted for domestic service wherein he finds so large an employment in the towns. The system has its drawbacks, even from a moral standpoint, as when the black boy is permitted to enter the bedrooms of young white girls, which often happens in present conditions.

Reform is needed in the interests of both black and white. To get the black man back to agriculture would mean an increased production of food, so essential to the world's well-being. Now in South Africa the breadth of wheat is quite insufficient for local needs, and necessitates the importation of many thousands of bags of flour. This is a scandal. Thus the liberation of the black races is bound up inextricably with the future of the white race in the sub-continent. I have asked, but I am not sure whether I am competent to answer the question: in what direction is the black man evolving? Does he grow better? Is he deteriorating? I have supplied some answer to the latter part of the conundrum, but when I come to consider his evolution, frankly, I am puzzled. I meet men in South Africa who say that the least approach of the two races is absolutely impossible; it would be repugnant to the best instincts of both. Nothing, they say, is sadder than the half-caste, who seems to have the defects and none of the virtues of either races. In any case, he is rejected of both.

As to whether it is quite correct to say that the half-caste has no virtues, I am greatly in doubt. Persons familiar with the negro problem in the United States have said, categorically, that the black man is rising through his union with the white; that admixture of blood is his salvation. He rises in the intellectual, moral, even, as I judge, the physical scale, by reason of the white strain that is in his veins. That is the experience in America and also in South Africa to some extent.

The half-caste in Cape Colony is often a man approaching the white in the excellence of his mechanical attainments and also in his intellectual grasp of ordinary daily problems. Then, again, when in German South-West, I heard frequently of the martial and other qualities of the mixed race known as the bastards of Rehoboth. These people are proud of their descent on the one hand from the Hottentots or Hereros and, on the other, from their German conquerors. Undoubtedly these people are more intellectually gifted than the surrounding white people. They are more successful than the blacks because of their great intelligence, and they dream of marrying their daughters with white people. But when some venturesome persons declare that the salvation of the black man in South Africa depends upon his alliance with the white, then I feel grave doubts of such a remedy. In the process of raising the black man by such a mésalliance, what becomes of the white ?

You must remember, in the first case, that the position is not analogous with that of the black races in America. Here the blacks vastly outnumber the whites. In Natal alone they are ten to one. Imagine then the effects of inter-marriage. You would get the complete absorption of the whites by the blacks. That is dreadful to contemplate, for the race would be obliterated, blotted out. Where are to-day the Portuguese—the first settlers in the country ? They have been absorbed by the black population. By yielding to the influence of environment, they have committed racial suicide. South of the Tagus, in the old slave days, many blacks were employed on Portuguese vineyards. There was inter-marriage, and the result—a large admixture to this day of black blood in those Portuguese. Again, in Brazil, the Portuguese colony, the race is not pure. Are we British people to countenance a mongrel race in South Africa ?

We have, surely, too much racial pride for that. It is true enough as the sentimentalists in Great Britain tell us, we must consider the white influence upon the black. But there is the reverse side of the medal. Have we considered the effect of the black environment upon the white: how it reaches out at him, and eventually engulfs him. Picture the state of the lonely, white storekeeper in a black community. Every bush seems to whisper suggestion: " Why not yield ? Why not yield ? " The subtle poison of it enters his system. You see the outward, visible signs of it in the growing disorder and carelessness of his attire. His clothes are dirty and unkempt, his chin unshaven. He has lost his self-respect. And then one day he loses his soul. A black woman shares his hospitality. He is finished morally and socially as well.

I recall an interesting conversation with General Smuts in Pretoria on the evolution of the black man. The Premier's magnificent speech on the Second Reading of the Native Affairs Bill has been referred to already in these pages, but the soldier-statesman is not a man to cherish illusions. He is a realist. Whilst he is quite prepared to give the black races opportunity for self-development, whilst his sense of justice impels him to dower the native with parallel institutions, yet, as I say, he puts a limit to the upward progress of that man. He says " No " to the suggestion that he can rise to great heights, perhaps overtopping his white " superior." In the old days there were centres of black culture. Timbuctoo was one of them, and had a University where the black man sat at the feet of his own professors, summoned from various quarters of the then dark continent. He conned his Virgil and his Homer and had the text elucidated by professorial learning. Where is that university now ? Sunk into the sands. And in the back streets peradventure, you may encounter signs of cannibalism, in an invitation to dine off your fellow-man. Again, Egypt was noted for its culture, for the intensity of its civilization. That civilization has largely perished. Even when it flourished, did the surrounding black peoples profit by it ?

Personally, I see the black man moving on towards a higher plane, but I cannot help feeling that his final emergence upon the summit of white equality will be long delayed. One swallow does not make a summer. A few cultured natives scarcely affect the mass, save to render it and the possessors of this culture unhappy. The ordinary black man lacks the training, he lacks the discipline, he lacks the suffering, the long agony, the sacrifices whereby the white man gave up his hopes of earthly happiness, yea, of life itself, to accomplish his high purposes, to bring about the realization of his ideals. The black man has not suffered ; he has sunned himself in the sun at noonday ; he has smoked the calumet of physical ease and sloth. If he has the qualities to rise, why has he not risen through the centuries ? But, you say, look at the black empires : there, are signs of his capacity. True. But signs also of his inability to endure. He abideth for a day and then departs, stealing back to the old life.

Many a story is told of doctors, of men learned in the law, of natives far advanced beyond their kind, who return to the old kraal life, throw away their culture and are received again into the black bosom of their people. Maybe it is pressure from without as well as pressure from within, which results in so tragic a termination to their studies ; they are not " received " ; they are shunned and isolated ; they feel they are strange creatures, who have no place in a settled world, for they are spurned by their own folk and laughed at by the whites. Yet I think such a condition is only temporary. There is a healthy movement afoot to train black men for medicine, that they may minister to their own folk, for, nowadays, the situation of native women is often critical enough, for the white doctors are few and far between and can spare but little time for native illnesses. I have heard of large fees being asked for attendance at a native confinement.

The riots at Lovedale (the Native College in Cape Province) in 1920, showed the violence of the explosive spirit. Suddenly a revolution broke out. There was a wanton breaking up of furniture, a spoiling of the institution's property and a stoning of instructors and teachers who had devoted their lives to the service of the black man. Then in an instant their work seemed undone; the black man returned to a savage, warlike state, and, after the damage and after the assault upon his teachers, rushed to the hills and there remained all night.

Next morning he descended blithely as if nothing had occurred. What an odd instance of his lack of consciousness! The ringleaders were caught and fined—but the incident remains an ugly lesson for us all. I think it points chiefly to this fact: that the black man is essentially imitative. He watches and observes and copies. The white man has shown him organization, and so he organized in demanding higher wages on the Rand—with results immediately hurtful to himself.

If you saw the black man laughing and showing his beautiful teeth, roaring as if his sides would crack, you would assume that he was the happiest mortal on the earth. I confess that I am often struck with the idea that only the semi-educated are unhappy. The raw, frank heathen seems a jovial fellow. The cook in the house in which I stayed for many weeks was an unregenerate heathen, with several wives to his bow; but he was an excellent cook and a most cheerful fellow with the sweetest temper I have ever met in black or white. Nothing was too much trouble, and he attacked our appetites with the strategy and forethought of a culinary Von Moltke.

What sort of an education, then, must we give him? There I join issue with the missionaries—admirable people though they are, and full of a desire to help and to serve the great cause of human progress and liberation of thought. Theirs is the half-divine desire to emancipate the black man from the thraldom of his superstition, from his witchcraft and his witch-doctors. He is such a helpless creature, surrounded by evil genii who are always impelling him to do something he does not wish to do. A creature of circumstance, bound by Fate, he is for ever plunging in the dark to rid himself of his terror, of his dread of ill and misfortune and all the impalpable things that hedge about poor ignorant man. But his educational scheme is a mistake, I think. It is too exclusively intellectual, I repeat. I heard a missionary say that the right proportion for the native was 75 per cent of manual training and the rest bookish. One of those who was listening to him remarked, "I only wish our missions taught even 25 per cent of the manual arts."

It is obviously a mistake to over-intellectualize the black man who but yesterday lived in the most primitive and even barbarous conditions. To train the hand and eye is as valuable as to train the mind. The honest carpenter means the honest citizen. The table will not stand if the morticing is imperfect, or the dovetailing not accurately done. And so the artisan learns that "honesty is the best policy" not in a cynical sense, but as a real active principle in life. A little learning may make him sad as it makes us all sad, though some who have no learning at all have lost their good spirits *tout de même*. I wish I could write a racy chapter on the negro and his evolution, on the absurdities of his speech, on the misfit gentleman who sometimes passes for the perfect article. But having spent some months in his society I have been impressed by the untranslatable nature of his humour. In his raw state, he is apt to be childlike in his ideas of fun. He will laugh at the least thing, grow cheerful and hilarious when there is little to explain it. See the blanket native at his midday meal, squatting round the pot and putting his spoon in, in his turn. Every movement is punctuated with laughter, every gesture shows his joy of life. He keeps up a running fire of jokes and gibes at the absurdities of his white masters : their pose and pretence, the lack of modesty in their women ; the hundred tricks whereby like ostriches hiding their heads in the sands, they try to deceive their quick-eyed critics. Useless pains ! And yet for all this disconcerting side to their nature, they are a kindly and wondrously likeable people, loyal, contented and happy if left alone. And yet the irony, the pathos of the situation is that you cannot leave them alone. They must be " brought into line " for the world moves and we move with it. Arrest one part of the machinery at your peril, O man of South Africa.

But, happily, a little learning is not always devoid of humour. The tender plant may bloom in the unlikely atmosphere of pedagogues. At a mission station which I visited in company with the Inspector, we arrived whilst a history lesson was in progress. The mistress was a Zulu girl. " Oh," she said, relaxing into a smile as she saw the official personage, " we are very fortunate to-day." " How fortunate ? " asked the Inspector. " Because we have just finished our lesson ! " said the young lady, with a touch of what the French term " malice."

One of the outstanding questions is land tenure. The communal system prevails in the native locations. There a man holds a bit of ground at the good pleasure of his chief. If he falls out with his chief, he may have to leave the location and seek his fortune elsewhere. The chief is rarely progressive and gives no encouragement to good farming. Moreover, the black men are crowded in their reserves and want more elbow-room. Sometimes they hint that the land given them is not of the best. Theirs is stony land and they point upwards to some fruitful plateau where the white man has his ground. There he gets good crops. On the other hand, the black man, as I have said before, is an imperfect cultivator. He has never learnt the art of extracting from the soil its full fruitfulness. Pondoland is a disappointment to those who expect great things of the native " on his own." Evidently he needs the stimulus of the white man to draw out the good that is in him. His tendency, when left to himself, is to laze and smoke and regard his wives whilst they do the work.

The solution—or one of them—of the black man's difficulty is individual tenure. Those who have most closely studied him think that he should be allowed to own land. Then he could put his back into it and know that he was benefiting personally from the results. The location system does not give him a chance for self-development. Before it was instituted, the black man owned land in South Africa; but a law was passed segregating the kaffir in order to protect him from exploitation by white persons anxious to sell him land at exorbitant prices. For the native who has made money is prepared to give any price to secure the coveted land. It is, of course, neither honest nor expedient to allow him to do that. But I remarked that in Northern Natal, where there is a number of native-owned farms, an improved type of farmer has been evolved who shows a marked advance over the location kaffir. He has even his ideas of civilization and has established schools and in some cases a church, on his farm lands. This is an excellent sign and suggests that if others were given an equal opportunity, they would prove equally progressive.

Missionaries, if they were freed from their duty of teaching in the schools would be able not only to help the native to become industrially trained, but also to give him serious guidance in such occupation as dairy-farming. The black man should be encouraged to keep poultry and market his eggs. Likewise, he could grow cotton as an adjunct to his crop of maize. Cotton would be better worth his while than sugar, which needs capital and possibly a period of two years of waiting.

If the black man can be retained at home in such conditions, if he can be given industries which he can work himself and make profitable in his own way, then he is sensibly contributing to the wealth of the community and is building up his own family fortunes. For the tragedy of to-day is that the young man comes into the town to earn his living and to contribute to the support of his family and there he acquires a distaste for the country and a growing desire to remain in the towns, in circumstances not at all helpful to the native mind. In the town locations, he learns many vices: how to drink and gamble on the horse races; if, on the other hand, he became a dairy farmer, he would be able to work on the land and remain in contact with wife and children.

Economics are closely connected with education. In Durban, for instance, some dozen night schools teach the elements of English to the black population. It is mostly the children of the Christianized natives who profit by these facilities. In the last quarter of 1919 was a serious drought; it had its immediate effect upon the attendance of the schools. Many of the children were withdrawn and sent to work in the towns or on country farms in order to help to buy maize and rice for their families. And I think it fairly certain that if black education is to forge ahead or to be placed upon a really sound basis, it must be made compulsory and free and universal. But the point is, of course, whether the time has yet arrived for so drastic a proposal, more especially as the education of the white leaves still much to be desired.

## VII

# THE TRANSITION OF THE NEGRO

THE question of the black man, his future and status, are a constant theme of the white man and his daily preoccupation. It takes precedence over any other in real importance to the country and, indeed, upon its decision depends the very existence of the white races in South Africa. It is the one that really matters. Dutch and British may challenge each other's motives and indulge in vituperation—a great deal of that is pure politics and will disappear after the next election. But there is something solidly serious about the relations of black and white. The whole scheme of things in South Africa depends upon its proper and adequate adjustment. The black man is master whilst being the servant. He is the pivot man, whilst seemingly one of minor consequence. Upon his orientation depends, indeed, the whole social and industrial fabric of the sub-continent. I hear men say there is no solution. It is as baffling, as indecipherable, as the Irish riddle, which has long defied the best efforts of honest men. It is as unanswerable as that classic conundrum, " What will be the situation of the races in twelve years' time ? " Who can tell us that ? Will the native have moved forward at a rate startling to our self-sufficiency or will he have loitered on the path of progress ? No one believes it possible that he can stand still. He must go forward into the light of civilization, or backwards into a gulf of racial animosity. This latter alternative, I think, is highly unlikely, if only because the native races do not hate us and are not generally unhappy under our rule. It may be said in general terms that their inter-tribal jealousies are more acute than any feeling they may have against us ; but that is less true to-day than formerly.

Circumstances are arising in the world of labour which unite the black man to his brother. We had a remarkable instance of that on the Rand during the early part of 1920. The black man united to assert his rights to higher pay and the world was astonished to see how organized he was. He posted pickets quite in the approved style of white strikers and hit upon a plan of inter-dump communication which enabled each compound to know what the other was doing. Though the demands of these strikers were rather preposterous, and were not formulated with real uniformity and varied with each mine, yet, behind it, was a remarkable movement of solidarity which had not been seen before in the negro world, more especially as it included the representatives of all the black peoples. They had forgotten their tribal quarrels and jealousies, and thought only of advancing the immediate cause. The movement failed, as others of a far less reaching character had failed, because of the combined opposition of the white man. Even the white miners were solid against their black helpers, and arranged to carry on without them. And then one morning the police rode into the compounds and disarmed the natives of their sticks and other weapons. Fighting ensued, for this action was strongly resented by the natives; some policemen were unhorsed, others had to use their firearms. The agitation died away (though at one moment forty thousand mine-boys were concerned in it), but not before there was rioting in the streets, in the course of which the natives flung stones and the whites replied with lead. There was nothing extraordinary in this : it had occurred before ; the peculiarity of the effervescence resided in its suggestion of carefully prepared and concerted action. It is a moral certainty that white agitation of the Internationalist Socialist type was behind it, aided and abetted by educated natives, some of whom are graduates of universities. None the less, it is significant of a great change in the world of black labour.

What will be the upshot of it all I can only guess—but the writing on the wall is for everyone to see. Maybe, some day, should an occasion arise for making a united and secret appeal to all the black people of the sub-continent, the native will withhold his labour—practically the only commodity he has to offer—and stampede towards his kraal. Such a form of passive resistance would, if persisted in, bring the white man to reconsider his ways. The native's grievance is that there is one law for the white man and another for the black. If the black man dares to strike, he is quickly brought to reason by fines and imprisonment "for breaking his contract," whereas the white man for the self-same illegality escapes scot-free. That this is so—and it is demonstrated every day—is a blot upon the system which puts the black man in contact with the white example and then punishes him for following it. Such an attitude is neither just nor reasonable. If he is to be treated as a child, then the treatment must be consistent, and he must be kept carefully away from evil influence. But it is easy to prove that the native got his inspiration to strike, not from his innate perversity, but directly from the white man. And it is increasingly evident that he is learning the lesson of organization more thoroughly every day. He sees its successes and the fear and inconvenience it causes to the masters, and resolves, no doubt, to put it again to the test at the first favourable moment. The native Press is under no illusions. It is well aware of the true inwardness of the strike.

Thus, for instance, the *Abantu-Batho* ("Voice of the People") declares: "The causes of the strike are neither mysterious nor underhand; they are perfectly plain and self-evident: namely, the high cost of living. But the people more directly responsible for the strike are the mine-owners who have just refused to give an increase of wages to natives on the grounds that, if they have a penny more the mines would have to be closed. . . . Almost in the same breath they gave the white workers an increase of minimum pay."

It is the old story: "Only the strong are respected," as Monsieur Emile Loubet, a former President of the French Republic, said on a famous occasion. And until the blacks are organized as the whites are organized, they can scarcely expect to get any better pay, though it is possible that external forces will assist in the solution of the problem. The sheer absurdity of paying one set of workers eight times more than another set of workers doing much the same class of work must, sooner or later, have a decisive influence upon the situation. Managers of the mines make no secret of the present anomaly. Practically every mining magnate, as I said above, is agreed that the mining material has deteriorated from the old days. Now for various reasons the mining proposition is less attractive to workers overseas and there is a larger incursion than ever before of poor Dutchmen, who often show little aptitude for the business. Between the indifferent miner and the clever skilled "boy" is very little to choose; indeed, it is notorious that many an experienced native knows more of the game of winning gold than the so-called miner. And the tragedy of the position is that no allowance is made for that fact in the pay sheet. The native help is always a "boy," subject to the limitations, which cripple and exasperate the more competent native; the miner, however ineffectual, enjoys the prestige and superior emoluments of the class. The "boy" gets no extra guerdon for his extra cleverness; the miner suffers not at all in status or pocket for his insufficiency. His pay is always certain to be largely in excess of that of his black aides—such are the inequalities of the position. When particularly skilled, he may make as much as £100 a month—indeed, in special circumstances he may make much more. If he is really skilled he is incomparably superior to his black coadjutor, but the latter should be given more responsible work to do—without supervision—such as packing and timbering. This, at least, is the opinion of most mine managers. Yet it is unlikely that the black worker will aspire, for years to come, to the same degree of pay as the whites. Even if he be fully emancipated from kraal life, he can scarcely have adopted the advanced standard of life of his white colleague. Thus he remains for some years to come, at any rate, the possible substitute and potential rival of the white man—the last alternative against closing down the low grade and least profitable mines.

Mr. Merriman has called the Rand the "University of Vice" because of the harm this promiscuity does to tribal restraints and discipline. It is the death, in many cases, of parental authority; it destroys the last link binding the black man to his nation and to his chiefs. Notoriously he learns our bad points before he acquires our virtues—perhaps because they are so much more patent than the better side of our nature and, not unnaturally, make a stronger appeal to the untutored mind. This coming into contact with the seamy side of civilization by the raw savage and his ready adoption of the outer and showy marks of civilization, such as the wearing of European clothes, with those high and indubitable marks of the gentleman: the collar and boots, often lead to misconception. The "boy" is outwardly civilized and, in the eyes of a sceptical and even scoffing world, passes for a mission "boy," though he may never have been near a missionary in his life. This strutting, rather ridiculous figure is written down a product of the mission schools. The old simple spirit, faithful and lovable, has been exchanged for an attitude towards life, which is intrinsically false because founded on the worst sort of models. Even those who most sincerely wish to befriend the negro and assist in his liberation and rise in the scale of civilization find difficulty in preserving their sympathy in face of a caricature—a faulty and perverted image of the Englishman. It is apparent enough that the race is passing through a transition stage, and, indeed, has developed an overweening sensitiveness which is painful to behold. Like the proverbial Irishman, the black man is trailing the tails of his coat on the ground and challenging us to tread on them. I was struck with this self-assertive and unhappy frame of mind in attending a congress of native teachers at a mission station, close to Durban, in the course of my stay in Natal. Questions affecting the theory and practice of teaching were submitted and it was pleasant to see the keenness with which they were discussed by the teachers. Some asked, with real pedagogic earnestness, whether they should or should not teach the counties of Natal to their youthful charges. The teaching of geography seemed, indeed, to engage their profoundest attention as if it presented special difficulties to the native mind, as no doubt it does, for anything more strangely different from the daily experience of the black pupil—especially if he is country-bred and comes from a kraal—it would be hard to conceive. With deep and unflagging interest they heard a model lesson given in which two "piccanins," by no means abashed, apparently, at their unusual prominence, answered upon such matters as the products of the country and even adventured into such mysteries as the climate and its influence upon agriculture. What impressed me, principally, was the delight of the children in answering and their freedom from that parrot-like repetition which I had been led to expect would characterize their replies. There was enjoyment and there was apparently a real grasp of the questions asked—unless, as was hardly credible, for it would have destroyed its value—the whole thing had been diligently rehearsed.

It is undoubtedly true that the tendency of the native school mind is towards vain repetition. The scholar, where he can, repeats parrot-wise. This has been remarked upon by persons visiting the schools, who have communicated their impressions to me. But it is not always true. Generalization is as dangerous here as elsewhere. "I found," said one of these visitors to me, "the lads in a class reading one of Scott's novels. 'Would you like to put a question?' asked the man who was showing me round. I replied that I should like to ask them whether they understood what they were reading. The response showed that I was right in my doubts about their understanding, and yet not wholly so. The last one who read and one or two of his neighbours seemed to have the vaguest notion of what they were reading, nor was that surprising considering the subject-matter—but some of the others whom I questioned showed a greater comprehension and one at least was ingenious in his explanations."

Some months earlier I had visited another mission school, and there saw infants receiving instruction in a foreign tongue, for that is what it amounts to. It was odd and a little disconcerting to hear them reading in an English of the queerest accent of "Ruth" and "Kit" who had come home from their sleigh-ride all glowing with health, their rosy cheeks giving the greatest animation to their features. Poor mites! How were they to know anything about rosy cheeks and sleigh rides? And yet we are continually putting this strain upon their faculties—as if, by a species of divine instinct, they must know all about the white man and his ways. The inappropriateness of these lessons to black children strikes the observer at once. Not only is the child expected to master the idiom sufficiently to answer in English—except in the lowest classes where the tuition may be in the child's own language, but he has to treat of things of which he has no first-hand knowledge.

Later in the year I went to Johannesburg and visited the house of a native teacher who received me with that kind of stately courtesy which belongs to Africa, whether you visit a native kraal or a Boer's farm. A blackboard hung against the wall of the room analysing "Julius Cæsar" in what seemed to me a wholly artificial and complicated manner. On the table of the room lay the play in question. To an American friend, who was accompanying me, I communicated my doubts as to the wisdom of such teaching. "Imagine," I said, "the distress and confusion of mind of the wretched 'piccanin' having to construe sentences from this masterpiece. There is not only a special vocabulary to master—that is bad enough—but some knowledge at least is imperative of Roman times and manners if one is to understand anything of the matter. This, I insisted, constituted a severe trial even for English boys grounded in Roman history and familiar, from their earliest years, with the general scope and character of Shakespeare's works. What cruelty was this which forced the black mind to form itself strictly on the English model? My friend, freely and with humility, admitted the defects and absurdities of the system—he was a missionary and, therefore, to some extent an expert in these matters—but he said, and afterwards I heard it confirmed by the most authorized persons, that the native resents, more than anything, any attempt to differentiate his education from the white man's. He is hungry for all the power and prestige that attach to the possession of such knowledge. He seems to fear that any other education substituted for it will be inferior—some counterfeit specially invented as "good enough for a black man." That is his fear, his constant preoccupation: that the white man should fob off upon him something inferior that would but confirm his inferiority. For, at the back of his mind, is always the idea of emancipation, of equality with the superior race.

He makes persistent and often pathetic attempts to overcome the disabilities that centuries of sloth and darkness have placed upon him. "I want the light," he says in varying accents, and his complaint is that we are standing in the way and preventing him from getting the light. It is not quite true, happily for our humanity and responsibility towards subject-races—it is emphatically not true in many cases—but it will serve as an illustration of his temper and attitude towards ourselves. He forgets the benefits, the self-sacrifice of missionaries burning up their youth and strength in his service and foregoing, to a large extent, the sweet society of their own social and intellectual equals to minister to him and draw him forth from his heathenism. And when experts who have really his interest at heart urge him to adopt another course of study from ourselves, he says, as I have pointed out, already: "What is good enough for the white man is good enough for me." The logic, from his point of view, is unanswerable, whatever we may think of its practical outcome. And so we find him poring over Latin and French and higher mathematics, though one would think these accomplishments have little bearing upon his life or likely requirements. But it is the white man's lore, the key to his mysterious and overpowering superiority. And so it must be borne with, as an integral part of native psychology, until we can prove to him that no species of unrelated learning ever benefited anybody who was seeking actual and material advancement. He likes to feel that in borrowing weapons from the

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white armoury he is really ready for battle, notwithstanding his lack of skill in their use.

Nearly everyone with whom I conversed expressed the view that the native's education was far too bookish. Sir Howard Gorges, the late Administrator in South-West Africa, made that complaint to me in respect of the teaching of the natives in the territory under his jurisdiction. It seemed to him that it should be made more practical. Dr. Loram, now one of the Commissioners under the new Native Affairs Act, and a great authority on native matters, holds that you must train the black man's hand and eye under pain of over-development in one direction, which is certain to lead to top-heaviness. School gardens have been formed at many of the mission schools and very pleasant results have been attained; but, in other respects, little has been done. At Amanzimtoti I looked into the workshops and found pupils of older growth—pupil teachers in fact—somewhat perfunctorily engaged in manual labour, making chairs and tables rather as if it were beneath them. They are in that stage of sensitiveness in which any counsel of prudence, any suggestion of hastening slowly is an offence, a reflection on their ability to achieve their aim, which is surely that of full expansion and equality with the white man. Industrial training is hedged about with the thought that it spells inferiority to the black-coated class. Is, indeed, the carpenter morally superior to the clerk ? I have heard this point hotly disputed. It is the old controversy between cloth and fustian renewed. But, at least, the carpenter is a more useful, nay, an indispensable person.

Industrial training, as a Cause at any rate, makes a certain progress, and is accepted in some quarters—I think with every excuse—as the real solution of the difficulty. In Rhodesia I found Mr. Keigwein, a Cambridge cricketer and athlete in his day, imposing his views on the industrial training of natives on a world quite ready to receive them. His theory is capable of instant application and, moreover, presents unlimited possibilities for the future. It consists in providing work for the native in his own locality. He will be instructed in that sort of industry in which he already excels such as basket-making, weaving, furniture-making, pottery, mat-making and kindred creative work by white teachers, who will set up centres where other teachers—themselves natives—may be taught. Thus the circle of instruction will constantly widen, as also, of course, the number of students and industrial workers. The native is to be encouraged to utilize the raw materials which he finds close at hand, and in that way the double service will be performed of giving him useful and profitable employment and of keeping him in his native village, where he may live a normal life with his wife and children. For it is hardly necessary to say that half the difficulties that occur with natives owe their origin to the practice of bringing in raw kaffirs to the mines, and, generally, of attracting natives to towns, where, separated from their families, they live an unnatural life exposed to temptations which are peculiarly powerful for a people in the transition stage without the intellectual resources and without the social institutions which play so great a part in safeguarding white youth. In spite of the experience gained during the war, in that regard observers express what must be surely hypocritical surprise at the continued demoralization of the black man subjected to town life. What other result could honestly be expected ? And the evil will continue to grow until some public spirited person arises with the foresight and generosity to found clubs for the natives. Industrial training is, in many respects, a solution of present day difficulties due primarily to the difficulty of taxing white men for the education of blacks—though there seems nothing inherently unjust in this—since we utilize their labour and should draw benefit from their further advancement. The height of cruelty would be to thrust them back to the old dead life under pretext that we cannot educate them. We have shown them the promised land and cannot now disregard the effects of the vision. There is nothing harder to bear in a childlike people than disappointment. We should take care not to inflict it upon them.

The tragedy of the situation so often is that there is no avenue of employment for those who have risen above their fellows. One of the most enlightened black women in Johannesburg told me that young natives who had matriculated found practically nothing to do; no one wanted them. They were "spoiled niggers"—too good for the posts that are usually given to natives, and not good enough, because of their colour, for higher situations. They were, therefore, in a parlous state represented by a continual quarrel with their environment. And since their nature is not to struggle, the environment overcame them. Thus the matriculated native finds practically no avenue for his knowledge. He can only become a police boy or an interpreter in a court—very limited posts in either case. And this same negro woman informed me that friends of hers had qualified as native nurses, but could get no employment because matrons of hospitals treating natives preferred to take as nurses girls they had themselves trained. "And so," said my informant, "some of the girls have been forced on to the street because they could get nothing to eat." It was a horrible solution. Was there not domestic service, I asked, knowing that many white mistresses clamour for native female help in the house. But the native woman protested that the modern mistress was not careful of her black maids. She placed them in a room, scarcely more than a shed, outside the house, where they were exposed to every danger. "The mistress does not know what is happening out at the back, whilst she is playing the piano in the front room," observed the negress, sententiously. It is true that the kaffir girl has often no fixed place in the economy of the white household. There is no provision for her in the house itself and, in consequence, no supervision or control is exercised over her movements after the day's work is done. Often as not, she shares quarters contiguous to those of the male kaffirs. Mrs. Benson, town councillor for a ward in Durban, realizing the difficulty of this question, is agitating for the establishment of a hostel for young native women, where they could be trained in household arts. Such a course would be in itself a guarantee. The very fact that they were trained and could command satisfactory wages would increase self-respect and almost assure an entrance to good homes. They would be careful not to jeopardize their own positions. That they were well looked after should tranquillize parents. For, not unnaturally, the fathers of marriageable girls object to expose them without any guidance or protection to the perils of town life. In my visits to the country parts of Natal, where one finds the kaffir or Zulu living much as his fathers lived, I noted a growing reluctance to allow young, unmarried girls to proceed to the towns on the ground that they were placed in dangerous circumstances. Such solicitude is not always as disinterested as it seems. The marriage prospects of the girls are seriously damaged; their price, which is traditionally fixed at ten cows, declines. Matrimonial offers appear to be difficult to obtain when the prospective bride is known to have had town experience. This question of the "lobola" (or present paid by the bridegroom to the girl's father) has an important bearing upon the education of women. A father still bound by the shackles of old tribal customs fears that if his daughter attends the mission school she will develop ideas of independence and probably decline the match arranged for her on some absurd pretext that the husband is old and ugly and that she does not love him. And the girl's brothers not infrequently support the father's opposition to the education of their sister. Education, indeed, is the great dissolvent and its work in this direction becomes daily more evident.

And yet more and more the natives are becoming impressed with the importance of education in their own advancement. Their keenness is something to put to shame the lukewarmness of the whites. This contrast is particularly noticeable in respect of the poorer class of whites, who (as I show elsewhere in this book) display not merely indifference, but almost hostility, to sending their children to school. The Government makes every effort to reach these people, but often they live remote from the railway on lonely stations far from the nearest neighbour and cannot be got hold of. The danger is that these people should sink below the kaffir in civilization and in intelligence. It is not uncommon to hear in different parts of the country of poor whites who work for native farmers. Meanwhile, the zeal of natives to acquire the lore of the white man is increasingly apparent. I have touched elsewhere on the spectacle of the Zulu lift-boy conning his "Reader" in the intervals of hoisting a superior world to the upper floors and taking them down again. As to what he understands of what he reads I do not know. Often I suspect it is not very much, but there is the intention, which is certainly interesting and indicative of a desire for self-improvement. Servants in white houses, likewise, are affected with a real keenness to advance along the path of culture and liberty. This desire, moreover, is world-wide and is expressed in various ways by every nation under the sun. As to whether the black races are capable of high development, that is a vexed question which by no means has been settled. I fancy it will settle itself much as female suffrage will settle itself. It was urged by opponents of woman's advancement that she had argued herself incapable of such advancement from the very circumstance that her progress in the past had been so slow. Here was the old argument of "post hoc" and "propter hoc." Whether it will be equally well proved that the native, also, is quite capable of advancement and of equality with his master, I do not know—but, on the face of it, it seems likely.

Dr. Loram, in his admirable book, *The Education of the Native*, argues by a series of ingenious tables and by much reasoning from observed cases that the so-called arrested development of the native at the age of adolescence can be satisfactorily explained on the assumption that he is not adequately taught in that the teacher fails to realize that he has reached a certain period in his life when new instincts are aroused in him. The lessons are continued in the same way and the fact that there is generally no progress is assumed to be because the possibilities of progress have been exhausted. Dr. Loram and the authorities whom he quotes suggest that the character of the lessons should be changed so as to respond to the new mood of youth which challenges everything in the spirit of "A quoi bon tout ça ?" ("What is the good of all that ?") His quickened nature rebels against routine, against perfunctory tasks. He wants to hasten things. He wants the assurance that what he learns will really help him on in the world. It is, on the whole, a healthful spirit, but, being misunderstood and left unanswered, it results in the vast majority of cases in the wrecking of the school career. Disgusted at what he considers to be the unpractical character of the lessons, the young scholar resolves to learn no more—or, at least, that is the actual outcome of his decisions—and he goes forth into the world to apply his rudimentary knowledge. It is rather a pitiful ending to high hopes and ambitions—a turn of affairs that suggests a new and black reading of *Love and Mr. Lewisham.*

Again, one must realize in all fairness that the native has to learn in a foreign tongue. Many of the allusions that he comes across are quite foreign to him. As I have said already in the course of this chapter, they represent experiences which are not his. How much of this so-called and, indeed, obvious backwardness is due to this fact that the pupil is being taught in a foreign language it is difficult to say without a careful and scientific examination of data. But it may be confidently said that it is responsible for a large part of the inferiority of the black races *vis-à-vis* to ourselves, but not wholly so, for the Indian, as Dr. Loram proves, is quicker than the native at school work, though he is faced with the same difficulty, i.e. an unfamiliar medium. We may assume, therefore, that there is an inherent disability due to various causes. It seems necessary that this inferiority should be measured in relation to certain standards. Only after an exhaustive examination shall we be able to determine in what consists this inferiority. The tests hitherto applied are not conclusive. It is certain that certain black men are able to obtain the greatest good from education. They become lawyers, teachers, ministers and editors of the public Press. But how far is their example able to be followed by others ? That can be determined only by the most careful methods.

My own view is that the native, taken in the mass, is undoubtedly slower than the European. He has not the same capacity—fruit, no doubt, of centuries of effort—of acquiring exact knowledge and of acting upon it. His brain is unhandy ; he learns with difficulty. He lacks, obviously, self-control ; he is easily flustered, and put out of countenance. He has not the mastery of his nerves and emotions that constitute one of the Anglo-Saxon's surest ground of superiority. Centuries of hard discipline, mental and moral, have not gone to his make-up. He has slept through the years, following his way of life in its extraordinary simplicity, its gross animal satisfaction, its almost entire absence of elevated influence. Religion, in the proper sense, he has none—only some vague sort of worship of ancestors and an ever-present fear of evil spirits. His code of morality has, indeed, its excellencies from the practical side. His daughter's virtue must be safeguarded because failure in that respect means diminished value of the girl in the marriage market. She is no longer worth the ten cows commonly exacted. And yet the raw kaffir has splendid qualities such as loyalty unto death and uncommon courage. His loyalty, too, tinges his ideas of honesty. He will not steal from his chief or from his boss ; his honesty in this respect seems to be proof against all temptations ; but he might fall and, indeed, think himself justified in appropriating the goods of one who was not his employer or his employer's friend if opportunity offered and the temptation were considerable.

With increased opportunities, I feel sure, the native might make considerable progress in education, for his zeal is unquestionable. Also, it is clear, to the most casual observation, that the percentage of the black races receiving any education at all is lamentably small. One can scarcely walk along the streets of any South African town without being asked some question by a native employed in one of the shops and charged with the delivery of parcels. He is generally unable to read the direction on the parcel, and has to ask the first likely looking white person to translate it for him. Education of the native races is practically in the hands of the missionaries—the Government, apparently for experimental purposes, has taken over a few schools. Since, then, education depends upon voluntary effort, it is, naturally, largely dependent upon time and circumstance : two capricious factors. And it is easy to see how great a part chance plays in the matter.

We might suppose that there is a shortage of the native food supplies due possibly to drought. The native's meagre revenues are affected. The children are withdrawn from the night school where, after the day's work, they are trying to imbibe a few elementary notions of the three R's—either because there is not money to pay for the modest school fees or, what amounts to the same thing, because the "piccanins'" labour is needed at the kraal or in some outside employment. The attendance at these schools is always affected by the state of the weather or of the mealie crop, whereby the native obtains his food. In the country the weather has considerable influence upon attendances. If it is cold—or what the unclothed native regards as cold—he is disinclined to go to church or send his children to school because of their want of clothes. And the present high price of all the kaffir's necessaries has had a prejudicial influence upon mission work, and the general advancement of the kaffir, and, indeed, has contributed sensibly to the unrest which has permeated his world as it has ours.

Is the untutored savage happier when left to his own devices? One hears many suggestions of the sort. "It is only when he is educated that he becomes unhappy" is a common opinion. See how happy he is in his raw state; he laughs all day. But when he has become civilized, then discontent enters his heart. He is affected by the inequalities of his existence. He sees what he never saw before. He is heartily sorry for himself, for his race and its status in the world. For the first time he has become affected by the disparity of his own state with that of the white person in general—no wiser, he suspects, and no better than himself. He is greatly moved when this thought first dawns upon him; he is oppressed by the sense of injustice. Why should all the gifts of the earth belong to the white man simply because he is white?

This frame of mind should not surprise us; it is common enough. And the black man's principal complaint is that he was not born into the privileged ranks of the white world. Nothing but the most absolute and far-reaching equality will satisfy him and it is difficult to see how it can be refused. It is more than probable that the extremists in England do a great deal of harm in their propaganda for the native, for they are unfamiliar with local conditions, and, moreover, they are totally irresponsible. There is nothing to pay, and they may break as many pots as they like. Such exercise is peculiarly grateful to some forms of vanity. "The frowsy little man in the Strand," as I have heard the typical Cockney busybody called, is filled with joy at his own importance. His questions have reached the Front Bench. His charges and obloquies have received the honour of a Ministerial denial. What matter? He is regarded as a vigilant soul by the people who judge on general principles and care nothing for the facts. Moreover, he has not to live with the native or employ him. He is only concerned with the abstract principle of his advancement—irrespective of the white man's safety or even of the strict equity of the proceeding.

I know no cause which is responsible for greater discontent in South Africa amongst the British and the Dutch than the calumnies of the champions of the black man. I have heard them resented and refuted by the most enlightened and responsible men in the country—certainly not those who could be accused of hostility to the native. It may astonish the meddlesome philanthropist to know that the lot of the negro is the constant preoccupation of the decent-minded and humane employer all over the country. He is anxious to treat the black servant well, but his knowledge of an inferior people tells him that any acts of special consideration and kindness will be regarded by them as signs of weakness. They will excite the reflection that the white man is afraid of his black servant, and, once that idea has entered the head of the native, all control is ended. Probably the employer is a farmer on a lonely farm. He may have children—daughters perhaps—and he is right to be strong and circumspect in his attitude towards a backward and still, in many respects, a semi-civilized race. That is not to cast aspersions on the black man, as some do in England on the white colonist, for, when kindly and firmly treated, he is, generally, an excellent and a trustworthy creature. But he has only just emerged from barbarism; it would be folly to credit him with the same control as the white man. None the less, I am very anxious to insist that during the Boer wars and the last War—even during the native risings, the conduct of black servants left in charge of the master's household and property was exemplary.

We must be careful to avoid exaggeration on either side. Whilst white opinion in Africa is extremely sensitive to blame, the same applies, even more strongly, to the native. Thus we must exercise prudence and restraint in dealing with the question either from one standpoint or the other. It is sufficiently remarkable that nearly all the disputes that have arisen between the British and the Dutch have had their origin in the kaffir question. The sometimes rather wild statements of missionaries and the positive slanders of some of their supporters have added fuel to the fire of resentment. A common and erroneous statement is that the kaffirs and other races have been deprived of their land by the action of the white man. "They have been driven forth from their heritage," we have been told often. Such is certainly not true of the Transvaal or of Natal, and is only true, in a very restricted sense, of other parts of South Africa. In consequence of terrible inter-tribal wars and sometimes because of epidemics, which decimated the countryside, the territory lay open to the march of the new-comer. It was the "invasion" of a man taking over an empty house, with all its appurtenances. Thus the Boers and thus the English entered into vast and vacant spaces which, one would have thought, would have commended the operation to the most confirmed internationalist and social reformer, whose spirit is vexed by the continual sight of absenteeism profiting by the labour of others. So far from the land having been stolen from the black races, many of the black races would have had nothing if it had not been for the white men. The same people have been saved from the cruel servitude of their own kind by the action of these selfsame "ravishers." It is important to understand this, for the so-called philanthropists do great harm amongst people who take their ignorance for malevolence and give them only credit for wounding others at a safe distance for the purpose of self-advertisement, whereas they are really inspired by lofty and altruistic motives. The natives themselves are often the unconscious victims of this wild disparagement of the white man, for they misconstrue its significance, and imagine that without any effort on their part and without the centuries of struggles which have gone to make up the civilization of the great white race, they can achieve, in an arm-chair, the assured and privileged position of their superiors in evolution. It is cruelty, none the less real because refined by thoughts of well-meaning disinterestedness, to offer a banquet to the new-comer who has not on the wedding garment. He is not yet ready for the position, and it is heartless to thrust him into society for which his training has not prepared him.

We may contrast the treatment of the black servants all over South Africa with the white servants of our own England until the attractions of war employment and the subsequent disturbance of labour conditions made the possession of servants a prohibitive luxury.

The usual working conditions of the general servant in England five or six years ago were far inferior both in pay and hours to those of the native house-boys to be found all over the Union. The interminable hours of work that the white woman of the poorer class had to submit to in England are unknown in white South Africa. Immediately after the evening meal—generally eaten at half-past six—is served, the native "boy" is free to depart to his quarters, which are always away from the house. He is never required to work in the evening, and if there are evening visitors the members of the household wait upon them themselves. The picture of the tired little "slavey," after fourteen hours of labour, toiling up basement stairs to attend to the still unsatisfied wants of her able-bodied master and mistress is non-existent in South Africa, where domestic service, on account of the Colonial custom of single-storey houses, is robbed of much of its nerve and health-destroying servitude. Again, all house-boys and the kaffir girl, if there is one, begin their "Sunday out" after three o'clock. In the matter of sleeping accommodation, their quarters are inferior in comfort and convenience to those usually offered to white servants, but mark an advance on the native hut and, indeed, on the forecastle of ships in which white sailors pass a large part of their sea life.

The solution of the black difficulty is to be found in awakened imagination. We of the dominant race must try to put ourselves into the position of the black man. "Do not educate him," urges the farmer, the manufacturer, the employer in any capacity. Yet such an attitude is not only narrow and selfish, but shortsighted and likely to lead to disaster. We cannot keep from the native, even if we would, the education he gets from daily and hourly contact with us. Are we to take a hand in his education, to direct it, stimulate it, mould it, or are we going to allow it to become something uncertain, haphazard, undesirable, a mirroring of our defects with no hint of graces? It depends upon ourselves whether that education is a success or not. The danger of leaving it to settle itself is that you may have, at any moment, the experience of Egypt, of India, of Ireland: disgruntled intellectuals or semi-intellectuals, having no proper scope for their energies, stirring up by every artifice of excitation the ignorant and ill-informed masses. The danger of such a proceeding is particularly acute in South Africa where, as I have said, the disproportion between white and black is extraordinarily great. In the path of progress is the only safety—or, at least, a comparative safety; in the course of resistance are to be found all the elements of danger. Which shall we choose?

## VIII

# IN THE TRAIN

OF all my experiences none has quite the flavour of the fortuitous, spiced with adventure which belongs to railway travelling in South Africa. The train is no more romantic-looking than any other, and yet it may be brimful of surprises. You may be certain that the journey, if it is any length at all, will transcend in happenings anything that may reasonably come to you in civilized Europe. Nor should we wonder at this, for the setting is so different. The railway train in South Africa is a great social rendezvous, the caravan, the square where everybody meets. The English train is an entirely different proposition. It is cold, correct, proper, extremely businesslike and precise ; it gets there infallibly. Even long-distance trains—as we understand long distance in England—arrive within minutes of their scheduled time ; indeed, they are sometimes ahead of it. Such precision in the running implies perfection in the road bed and coal and water arrangements that never break down. There are no cows on the line to stop the " Flying Scotsman," or the Cornish Express. Well-behaved English cows do not stray on the line, or, if they do, they are sophisticated enough not to get run over. These English trains vary not one hair's breadth in their daily performances ; but incredible events may delay a South African train rumbling its way, say, from Cape Town to Johannesburg (practically a thousand miles) or beyond. There may be a washaway, carrying a part of the line yards from its original position, or a break-down of the rolling-stock, worn out and rickety from its rough usage during the War. Or a dozen other circumstances may retard the running: some personal and peculiar to the driver, perhaps, for temperaments develop strangely under these spacious skies and away from the daily rub of crowds. Or, perhaps, Nature has broken out and poured hailstones on the line, making it so slippery that the train cannot mount the steep gradients. Sand has to be sought from a neighbouring farmer to make the wheels "bite." But a few years ago, elephants and even locusts held up the train!

Travelling may last for days through the unending steppes. You begin by knowing everybody in a broad, general way; you finish by knowing everybody in a particular sort of way. First contact with your fellow-passengers is helped by an inspection of the train-plan, where everyone's name is given. You learn that you are sharing your compartment with Mr. Habbakkuk Brown, a British major, and two Dutchmen. The journey begins after you have said "good-bye" to friends. This speeding of the parting is a solemn ceremony, and yet not too solemn, for there is more laughter in it than wiping of eyes. The scene is typically South African. Here is a football team off to conquer fresh fame for itself on the fields of the Transvaal or Natal; a swimming club returning to home quarters after unimagined glories and receiving a boisterous send-off from generous opponents; a great man, evidently a politician, giving portentous hand-shakes to his supporters, as one who says, "Watch me on my political tour and see how a patriot works." Then there are the couples and the families, for this is the land of the early marriage, where hope lives with the happy pair. None is harried, none hurried. There is no indecent haste at least upon the railways. The train moves leisurely away along the single track which stretches out its tentacles, indefinitely, into the night. In the old German South-West, now become South-West Africa, I met a genial official of the railway world, who remarked: "Oh, we don't run the service by the time-table here; it's by the calendar! Seriously, though," he added, "if we can get in all our trains in a month we are well content." I thought of this when I heard of a train being lost for a week. That was during the campaign in the South-West. As to the why and wherefore, I heard only vague particulars, but was led to assume that jovial Bacchus, in the shape of local brandy, had taken a hand in the game. Nor, having tasted the brandy, did I feel surprised at the result. It was a real Father of Forgetfulness.

By the calendar, then, the trains jog along at fifteen miles an hour, rising on occasion to a full twenty, or even more, on a favourable grade. Sometimes I am reminded, as I sit in my coach, of a kicking mule, which has been stung by a bee. The train gives a wicked jerk. If you are unlucky enough to be standing up at the time, you sit down with disconcerting suddenness or are projected, headlong, into the neighbour's lap. It is well to choose the lap and to sit opposite a soft and capacious one. Even so, there might be objections on the part of the owner of it. You are inclined to blame the driver for putting on the brake with such savage inconsequence. But the experience is so universal in South Africa that you hesitate to ascribe it to mere inattention. Surely it must be some vice in the construction of the road—a hummock over which the train disjoints itself in each succeeding link.

Then there is an exciting part of the line which gives you the sensations of an Alpine railway. This is between the Natal border and Durban. We are descending from a high plateau to the sea-level over the shoulder of the Drakensberg. If you were travelling on an ordinary road, there would be tunnels, no doubt—a succession of them—but we are in Natal, where they do things differently, and so the constructor has twisted the line in and out, round this curve and that, until we reach the bottom. It is said that he was paid so much a mile for the job! Nowadays, there is a project to shorten the line by following a better route. This kind of railway, as you may suppose, needs skill to operate in bad weather. To see the poor engine panting up slippery gradients is to feel compassion with steel and iron. In the section of the line above Pietermaritzburg, at Van Reenan's Pass (5,500 feet) the engine twists itself about in its fantastic course, as if it were going to look in at your carriage window. Now it is at the head of the train—but ever and anon it takes a turn at pushing its burden up the hill. This is original enough, and those who hate any travelling less luxurious than the Great Western's run to Bristol will resent the experience; but to me it was delightful if only to glance out of the window at the surprising loveliness of the Garden Colony. We passed the " Valley of the Thousand Hills " on the way from the old capital of 'Maritzburg (as it is generally called) to flourishing Durban, and such a series of views I had never seen before. Indeed, the whole of Natal, viewed from the railway train, is a captivating vision of verdure, of hill and dale, of dense plantations of wattle and fir. I remember my first impression when I entered the country from Newcastle, the coal area, about six in the morning and received a solemn salute —the uplifted arm—from an old Zulu by the line-side. The morning was radiant with sunshine, and the glory of a sky, pink and gold and blue, shining down upon a country verdant as an English meadow, but with other tints in it—this indeed, was refreshment, after the dry, dusty plains of the Transvaal!

The monotony of travelling is varied by the fact that the train, though by all the gods an express, is in truth a local one, for it has to do both services, walloping at its cumbrous best in between stations and staying unconscionable times at appointed stopping-places. These stations are generally a shed or two planted in open country—the interminable veld or some half-desert track which looks hopeless enough, but which your neighbour declares has great qualities as a feeding-ground for cattle. The tiny bush you see growing on red earth in between the tufts of a ghostly grass is marvellous enough in its succulence, and, even dry, furnishes the cattle with precious food. There is always business at these centres : they are the rallying points for miles round. When you leave the more settled parts of the Union and adventure into the sparsely populated areas, the stations become increasingly important in their human significance.

Natives gather at the station, and are of all types. The Zulus are the aristocrats of the black world ; but there are Fingoes, Pondos and members of other tribes. The Bechuanas, on the road to Rhodesia, are the most picturesquely unclothed of any, if we except the Kavirondo in the region of Lake Victoria Nyanza. There the womenfolk at work in the fields are completely naked. Their lithe and beautiful figures stand out with the perfection of Greek statues, cast in bronze, as they wave shapely arms to the passing train. Yet their morality is superior to any, as if the wearing of clothes (as is often alleged in Africa) had a deteriorating effect. Bechuana boys chase the train for a hundred yards or more clothed in little more than a smile. The magnet is the white man's pennies. Though their country is woebegone and they themselves present no appearance of intelligence, still less of stamina, they are an artistic people, fashioning little animals with great art and ingenuity. I have before me, as I write, some amusing figures : a leopard, with a wondrous curly tail, stalking a couple of guinea-hen ; a hippopotamus, much be-spotted with poker marks ; a giraffe, which lends itself readily, of course, to caricature and a certain parrot with green, implacable eyes and an angry, indescribable tail.

All these things come to the traveller as he proceeds at pedestrian pace along the single track running for ever in the midst of loneliness. Where are the multitudes that crush and crowd the cities in stifling Europe and Asia? Where, under the echoing sky, are the settlers who should be turning these millions of acres into fruitfulness? "Piccanins" start up from nowhere to shout and wave to the train. Their enthusiasm is perennial. To-morrow they will be just as keenly moved, when the next train passes. Now they wave their caps, their only garment, above their little, pot-bellied bodies, cheerful morsels of black South Africa. Sometimes you may see, about nightfall, natives of larger growth waiting by the line-side with dogs of lurcher type. They are Matabele, for we are now in Rhodesia; in their hands are assegais. My travelling companions say: "Oh, these fellows have been out hunting. Their dogs are as cunning as foxes. When they chase the game they turn it this way or that by cutting off the corners, and then they pull it down. There is always a buck to be had, if you know where to look for it."

These conversational interludes form one of the fascinating features of the journey. Everyone speaks to you; you need no introduction beyond the honesty of your intentions, and that is taken for granted. Scarcely on any other footing could you live in this atmosphere of cordiality and open-heartedness. My neighbour, the British major, wants to know about cattle-breeding. Is the country adapted for that? We are now north of Kimberley and my two Dutch travellers take up the tale, waxing enthusiastic over the ranching possibilities of the country. In the district of Mafeking or of any of the back blocks of the Union, they said, were opportunities for running stock. These Afrikanders were particular friendly. When, suddenly, in the early morning we draw up with a horrid crunching of brakes and a start to waken the dead right opposite a coffee stall, one of the Dutchmen insisted on paying for my coffee : a simple and kindly act which was by no means isolated. Yet, at first meeting, the Boer is apt to be ungracious ; gutturally talkative with his own kind and disregardful of the rest. This is partly shyness. When the ice is broken, his good nature and desire to give you what he has are apparent enough.

But the backvelder of the cruder sort, who boards the train in regions near the hunting-grounds (such as on the western edge of Cape Province) is a type to himself. His eyes are fierce and watchful like a hawk's ; his face bronzed and seared by the sun, and his body shaggy and ill-groomed like a Shetland pony with its winter's coat upon it, give, at least, the impression of iron strength. Often he is of gigantic height and proportions, making the average Englishman look small and frail beside him. His speech is full of growls and barks and spitting expletives, his thirst amazing. That is how I saw him when the country grew wild and untamable like his beard and fiery eyes. He had scented buck and was off after it—not exactly like a sportsman, for his notion was to sell the meat as well as the hide and horns. And so he lurched off the train with his gun on this characteristic venture. A singular race, these wild men of the plains, but strong and gnarled like an old oak tree deep anchored in the soil of an impenetrable ignorance.

The most agreeable institution in the train is the platform at the rear of each carriage, which might have been designed for conversation—" le dernier salon où l'on cause." It is here that travellers gather to converse, particularly if there is nothing to look at in the scenery, as when travelling through the Kalahari Desert. Then little groups come together drawn by that mysterious fluid that leaps upon this shoulder and that, revealing, it may be, unsuspected affinities—friends of a moment that will meet no more. The subject may be Prohibition in Canada or Scotland, or Botany, Feminism, or the native problem. These communicating spirits are drawn by a sympathy stronger than their reticences, which turns the dusty platform of the train, passing through the burnt-up steppes, into a flowing river of comprehension, into a tribune of human intercourse. Whatever is said bears the mark of freshness and freedom from convention, which is characteristic of South Africa. These platform discussions are quite delightful, and explain the subtle charm that the country exercises over a spirit imprisoned in the colder conversational latitudes of England.

It was a stopping-place in the Worcester and Paarl region, near Cape Town, on my return from a journey up north, that a charming head obtruded itself from the carriage window next to mine. Two young men raced together, messengers of this divinity, bringing fruit and chocolates and " something to read." It was a spectacle of knightly rivalry, extremely diverting to the beholder, whatever might have been the sensations of the twain upon whom she smiled impartially. But when youth departed at the next station vaguely wondering, no doubt, where it stood in feminine favour, quiet maturity had its unlooked-for innings. A knock came at the door of my " coupé " and to my " Come in " there entered the charming neighbour, prettily confused. " I'm awfully bored, and so I thought I'd come and see whether you were," she said with the engaging frankness of this land. And for the intervening hour that lay between us and Cape Town we discussed the topics of the day. There was no shadow of embarrassment on either side; it was a natural proceeding. " Let no man think evil," I reflected, when I saw my travelling companion surrounded by girl friends at Cape Town laughingly recounting, no doubt, her adventures by the way. This is " South Africa all over," as Kipling says.

Here I am at Keetmanshoop, gateway to South-West Africa. I am marooned for several days waiting for a train to take me to Windhuk, the capital. Meanwhile, not liking much the notion of putting up at the German hotels of the little town with its powdered granite paths and roadways and the vegetation of a London backyard —with the curious addition of high wire fences, which, I learn, are to prevent driven stock from straying into the house—I obtained permission to sleep in my railway coach, which had been shunted to a siding. I appreciated the privacy secured, but the thin raincoat I had with me—the only covering for my bed—was poor protection against the intense cold. I had left my thicker clothes behind, not realizing the difference in temperature from Cape Town. I took my meals at the railway restaurant and found good food there as well as an excellent society composed of engine drivers, guards and goodsmen. They were not in the least stand-offish, and I got a precious insight into their ways of life. Out in this free colony all social avenues are opened to the likely young man, and he who sat down to dinner with open throat and with hands that smelt of oil talked with relish of the dance he had attended the night before and of the tennis he would have on the morrow. And I felt that in a world where personal qualities are the passport to favour society is kept sweet and morals safeguarded by this mingling of the classes—even if the very name is not a misnomer.

It was in this joyous company that I heard the story of an ancient driver who was asked his age. " Ma railway age is forty-nine," he said, " but ahm thinkin' I must be near seventy." And a ganger in this country, reproached for shooting the magistrate's guinea-fowl, responded with a vast show of earnestness, " They were obstructing the line ! "

Sir William Hoy, the General Manager of the South African Railways, is their guiding spirit. He is sometimes referred to as " the King of South Africa." But this is mildly ineffective as a title. " Dictator " would be the better term in these days of declining monarchies. He is a Scotsman, and that is saying much in South Africa. Masterful and fearless in opposing what he considers to be hurtful to his service, he has great influence, sometimes said to be worth twenty seats in the Assembly. This Warwick of the railways is, of course, far more than a " General Manager " in the English sense. He is a political personage, controlling a great branch of the Civil Service. His style, precise and to the point, is best seen in the *Railway Magazine*, where his sanity and statistical sense lay low many fallacies. The fact that Dutch and British find employment in the railway service tends to good understanding between the races. Even in such a British stronghold as Natal, the Dutch infiltration is going on slowly through the railway system. The poorer Dutch, forced to find positions away from the land, are " making good " as station-masters in remote districts or in lesser posts along the line. At Usakos in South-West Africa (junction for the Narrow with the Cape Gauge) German mechanics work side by side with the Dutch and British, a mixed family party which has its quarrels and also its hope of better things. A Dutch mechanic whom I met here declared that a bond of union between all workers was being forced by the Labour Party which, ultimately, would bring the Germans into line. However remote this may be, it is undoubtedly a possibility of the future. Meanwhile, natives are brigaded in great force along the railway and there is likewise the Cape boy constituting a large body of train attendants, whose business it is to see that long-distance travellers have their beds.

I think the strangest railway centre in South Africa is Walvis Bay, which was British long before the Hinterland fell to us as the result of the German South-West campaign. It is established in the Namib desert, which I describe in another chapter. The township, such as it is, is on shifting sands which constitute such a drawback that there is talk of removing the buildings to firmer soil some miles further north, in the direction of Swakopmund. On the present site is a railway rest-house, where I stayed the night with the Assistant-Engineer of the line; a comfortable inn, appreciated by warships when they put into the Bay; a magistrate's court and post office, a few offices and residences, a railway repair shop and the condenser, which turns sea water into a potable liquid—and that is all. At spring tides, the place is a-flood and the tiny settlement becomes a Venice. We have a Protectorate, long established, over a few miles of the interior, and the natives are in our pay. Their principal nutriment comes from the Naras, a succulent desert plant. The natives themselves were lighter coloured than I expected to see and might have been Mexicans instead of Hottentots. Out on the Bay, in the harbour tugboat, one realizes the extent of the roadstead and how easily it would accommodate the British Fleet. This, of course, explains our possession of this desolate spot.

My greatest joy in travelling came from the upper reaches of South-West Africa. They are served by the Narrow Gauge, a two-feet single-track railway built by the Germans to carry copper from the mines at Tsumeb to the open seaport of Swakopmund. When the Union forces took over the country they altered the line from Usakos to the sea to make it conform to the ordinary Cape Gauge of 3 ft. 6 in. But here from Usakos the Narrow Gauge takes us up-country and provides us with a few joyous experiences. There is something delightful in the freedom and freshness of it: the turquoise blue sky, the eternal veld, sometimes the open plain, sometimes the bush with kopjes on the skyline or tumbled in the foreground or the illimitless sea of grass with a stubbly tree here and there and curious castles of red earth, perhaps twenty feet high, work of the incorrigible white ant. He is certainly the most industrious worker in the country, whatever we think of the morality of his labour, for he has an insatiable appetite for wood and eats us out of house and home if he can. No wooden floor is safe from his activity.

Life on the Narrow Gauge—fit subject for a poem! How absurd to be hurried, to chase from one day's end to another, as if it were a matter of world concern whether we arrive at a particular destination at one minute to or at a few minutes after. Here no one has any such illusion; we know it to be absurd. We have ruled out questions of time; they are of no earthly consequence in this happy land.

There is the same insouciance in Zululand. A lady enquired of the guard, lunching like the rest of us, at the station restaurant, when the train would start again. The official, with his mouth full of pie, responded, with evident astonishment: "When you have finished lunch, of course." And always afterwards I watched the guard when a little uncertain of the train's movements. If he still sat, then all was well.

In British East Africa my engine driver put back some two or three miles because he had overshot the spot—not a regular halt—where a passenger should alight. And several times on side lines I have seen the train stop and shunt, because a passenger had dropped some article overboard or because goods had slipped from a truck. In one case in Rhodesia a bag of flour had spilled itself on the line. Since it was gathered up in native hands it must have had unusual richness in the baking. On the Kokstad line (the terminus of the Natal system) which covers many curves, the travelling companion of a friend of mine periodically quitted his seat and walked to the next station. As he knew all the short cuts, having assisted in laying out the line, he arrived invariably before the train. And in Zululand much the same thing happened to me. I had been staying with friends twenty miles from Eshowe. The clocks were wrong, and we missed the train. " Never mind," said my friend, " we'll catch it yet." And we drove off in the Ford to Ginginhlovu, where we had three-quarters of an hour to wait before the train appeared. It had, indeed, to pursue many convolutions between the two places.

On the Narrow Gauge, from which, I fear, I have sadly strayed, brake-boys are used. There was something quaintly unusual in the sight of dusky youths high-perched above the trucks ready to brake the wheels when the engine whistled. And they know their work so well that they scarcely need this intimation to begin. I know not whether a vacuum system could be applied to such toy railway stock, but here, at all events were the " boys " huddled in the oddest and most nondescript garments as is their wont. But we could not travel at night, and the reason was that " the boys would fall asleep ! " The authorities were right in sparing us this new sensation of a man falling every now and again upon the line. This would have been too piquant an addition to the stories of lions and panthers and wild beasts generally, with which our ride was beguiled. We were going to stop early that evening I was told. " Why is that ? " I enquire of a genial soul. " Well, you see," he admitted, " there's a good rest-house where we pull up and t'other one, where we usually stays, ain't so good. Besides," and he lowered his voice confidentially, " the beer's fine, see ? " And then I understood what life meant on the Narrow Gauge.

Dear, dinky little train, with its doll's carriages and its tiny " diner " where eight can be seated for a feast, which is a marvel when you reflect on the conditions of time and space. Indeed, I am constantly amazed at the culinary resources of the S.A.R.: five courses in the sandy wastes is something to be proud of. Whilst I reflect on this, the train stops a while—indeed, so great a while that I seek the cause. "I expect it's Jim; he ain't finished 'is 'undred up yet," said official Friendliness. And of a truth, I could hear the click of balls. Life, life on the Narrow Gauge!

## IX

# EARL BUXTON'S SIX YEARS

SIX years of a Governor-Generalship is a long time, and when it includes the great European War the years count double. Nevertheless, I suspect that Earl Buxton left South Africa, with all its poignant problems, with real regret. It is certain that his departure was regretted by all classes, for he had been particularly successful as the second Governor-General of the Union. He had presented, on the whole, perhaps, the smallest surface to criticism of any Governor sent out from England. Lord Gladstone, his predecessor, in the greater post under the Union, had the misfortune to arouse racial prejudice in the reprieve of a native from the death penalty, though strict justice is said to have been on his side. But strict justice has never become acclimatized in Africa. It is the land of passions, the land of tropical heats and humours, and one is apt to be influenced by them. It is only the rare man who can preserve impartiality in face of "colour." Lord Buxton managed not to arouse anybody's passions, for he was discretion itself—a discretion tempered by tact and a faculty for comprehension which has been most precious. Nearly everyone praised him in Cape Town. Even the Dutch liked his quiet dignity, and the simplicity and sober ceremony of his receptions. The hospitality shown to synods and other Dutch assemblies struck just the right note. Parade they would have resented; familiarity they would have looked doubtfully upon as something suspect in an Englishman of the official class ; but accessibility, the quality of graciousness without condescension, the habit of going and coming about the Union without fuss, and yet, in all seriousness, listening patiently and courteously to complaints, reminded them of the old days. This was particularly true of the Boers in the Transvaal and Free State, who miss the familiar ways of " Oom Paul " and President Brand. In their straight, chimney-pot hats, rusty tail-coats, and unshapely nether garments, these paternal administrators went amongst their own folk, cheering them with their rugged cordiality and putting them completely at their ease by their utter absence of all formality.

Earl Buxton went out of his way to meet the rebel farmers of the back-veld—those notoriously hostile to the British connection, who have " no use for " Governors-General. Are they not expensive appendages, costing the country £100,000 a year ? " Mere glittering foolishness," one Dutch paper calls them. Sometimes it happened that in the meetings where he carried the prestige of his official position, there were only two loyalists present : the convener and the district police officer. None the less, the dissentients listened attentively, perhaps flattered at the attention shown them. In any case, a Boer, like other people, is subject to the " prestige suggestion," as the psychologists say. That suggestion may not make him vote contrary to accepted traditions, but he will return home with the feeling that at least one Englishman is decent and straightforward. And some of his prejudice will disappear in the pleasant atmosphere of coffee and cigars, which Lord Buxton knew how to conjure up. Moreover, Earl Buxton knew the character of the man with whom he has to deal as the dominant partner in South Africa. He knew his dour and intractable nature. He had studied his " état d'âme " through long years of official life as Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, and

EARL BUXTON, GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

LORD BUXTON AT GABERONES (TRANSVAAL), SEPT. 8, 1917
Lord Buxton is third from left

as a member of the Campbell-Bannerman Cabinet, which gave back the country to the Boers (though it retained the silver link of the suzerainty). During this time he was constantly studying the problems which have always confronted us in our dealings with the South African Dutch. His Under-Secretaryship synchronized with the first Matabele war, a quarter of a century ago, and that gave him an insight into native grievances and mentality. But though he had graduated in our classic difficulties with South Africa, he did not surely foresee that, a decade or so after the two provinces had been restored to the Boers, there would be a sharp recrudescence of bitterness towards ourselves without —as far as one can see—adequate cause. That was a feature of Earl Buxton's administration no less remarkable though, happily, far less significant than the active espousal of the Imperial cause against Germany by Generals Botha and Smuts. One trembles to think what would have happened had they held aloof or become actively hostile.

But the anti-English feeling which spread along the High Veld must, I think, be set down to the intrigues of Germany, often unconsciously acted upon by the Boers. The " armed protest," as it was called, against the German South-West campaign, was led by men who firmly believed that Germany would give them their independence, if the Union held off from her Colonies. The predikants, especially the younger men, eagerly seized upon this view and inflamed racial feeling against the English by their pulpit utterances. It was mainly an affair of hot-heads. But, unfortunately, hot-heads carried the day, as they so often do, even in circles more sophisticated than the backvelder. The bait was swallowed ; the poison spread. I have talked to Boers who fought against us twenty years ago, and they declare that, for the most part, they and their contemporaries are content with the present system, though they may sometimes hanker after the old days. Sweet was liberty and the feeling of it, and the pastoral isolation of the farms before the English came with their notions of progress. But the British connection has meant, at least, authority, and is thus commendable even to the secret heart of recalcitrants. Whether under Sir Theophilus Shepstone or Lord Milner, the suzerain has stood for order, and order and the strong man are what the Boer most respects.

Earl Buxton's traditional Liberalism commended him to the tactiturn dwellers on the veld. He looked more closely than most men into their hearts and found there a curious mixture of sentiment, half admirable and heroic, half anti-social : an indomitable spirit, a fierce attachment to the soil, a deep, undying love of independence, coupled with stiff-necked pride and an obstinacy amounting to a vice. He seemed to understand the significance of Nationalism, the pure politics of it and, no doubt, its essentially anti-British character, in some notorious cases. Of course, the old spirit has never died. How should it die in twenty short years ? —this spirit which says, " This country was my home, in which I was free as the air. You took it from me and gave it back coupled with conditions of which I do not approve. Away with your monarchies and Governor-Generals ! I want my old presidents, friendly and familiar. That is the government I understand." Earl Buxton knew it all and remembered, doubtless, undergraduate days when one spoke in Union or debating society on " the only rational form of government for civilized man : a republic." This truly academic attachment to republicanism meant just what it did mean : youth and high spirits and a leaping idealism not unconnected with an impatience of authority, especially if it seemed cumbrous and ceremonious, as English authority so often does to quick, imaginative minds. And the young Dutchman, breathing the pure air of the high veld, speaks and thinks as young men of Oxford and Cambridge do, either in Common Room discussions or in their solemn parliaments, assembled to pass judgment on the world's doings. But this half-sportive revolt was based on past rancours ; there was the danger of it—that it would fly to the head as well as to the heart and stir up reasoned memories and motives that had best lie at the bottom of the well. All this, as I have suggested earlier, was cunningly exploited by the German, who was careful to drop his seed in the right ground. A widespread and dangerous conspiracy was nipped in the bud by the energy of Generals Botha and Smuts, supported by the real patriotism and good sense of the community.

There is something almost fabulous, recalling the chivalry of knightly times, in the public spirit of young Dutchmen who fought in four campaigns on four fronts for the honour of the Empire. What a tribute, almost unexampled, to the inspiration of the Old Country! That, certainly, is true, but it is also true that Nationalism of the better, broader sort was at the bottom of this acceptance of the military burden. The new generation, Dutch and English, is immeasurably proud of South Africa, and so it fought for the Cape or the Transvaal (as it might be) as well as for civilization. It is of this splendid stock that the country is being formed.

Earl Buxton's interest in the native is both personal and atavistic. A descendant of Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton, so honourably known for his fight for black freedom, he must feel to the full, one supposes, the negro's disabilities. His meetings with the raw native never failed to be interesting. For his office as Governor-General carried with it also that of High Commissioner for native protectorates, and his lordship profited by it to make frequent visits. Indeed, no servant of the Crown has been more active than he in travelling over the length and breadth of his extensive charge. Two years ago he visited Khama's country (Bechuanaland) and had an interview with the veteran chief who is nearly ninety years of age and remarkably hale and energetic. He has sound and even modern notions of health and hygiene and is determined to keep away drink from his people. When the Governor-General went to see him, his regiment was gaily dressed in red, yellow and blue. His body-guard was in white, with helmets sporting white feathers.

At Livingstone, in Northern Rhodesia, their Excellencies (for Lady Buxton accompanied the High Commissioner) visited the Great Moquai; she is aunt to Yeta, the paramount chief of the Barotse, and a very great personage. All her subjects crawl before her. Her present husband is said to be the ninth; the others, it is conjectured, have gone to the crocodiles! The little Moquai, who is the daughter of the redoubtable old lady, is herself very much of a Tartar; but her company manners are perfect. Conversation on ceremonious occasions is apt to be non-committal and rarely extends beyond the weather and the crops. The Resident Commissioners, of course, deal with serious matters and report to the High Commissioner. Thus the visits are purely representative.

The Ex-Governor-General has a warm heart for the coloured man, i.e. the half-caste, and has endowed a hospital in Cape Town for his children (as well as those of others) in memory of the Hon. Denis Buxton, killed in France in 1917. It is the first institution of the kind at the Cape. Good works have greatly occupied Countess Buxton, the admirable helpmeet of her husband. The Governor-General's Fund, amounting to three millions, for the assistance of the returned soldier and of the families of those who did not return, has been a godsend to the country and has acquitted it of any charge of ingratitude towards its heroes. Earl Buxton himself suffered in his deepest affections by the loss of an only and brilliant son who joined up from Eton and was destined for Oxford. That the father will be greatly missed from South Africa goes without saying. A suitable successor has been hard to find. Lord Buxton's practice of going everywhere and living in each province—sometimes at his own expense, for at Pietermaritzburg (the official capital of Natal) and at Bloemfontein (the governing centre of the Free State) no official residences are provided—gave him a rare knowledge of local opinion, so divergent in South Africa and due to remoteness from the administrative centre, and the differing origin and experience of each colony. Finally, there was the challenge to his official position by a large proportion of the population, which may be placed, perhaps, at 33 per cent. This is, of course, the most trying situation of all. But Earl Buxton gave proof of tact when he talked to these Separatists just as he did when addressing the Germans in the newly acquired South-West territory. That visit was one of the most important acts in his official career, for it meant the official taking over of the country.

South Africa is standing at the cross-roads. It must decide whither it will bend its steps. Earl Buxton certainly contrived to add new lustre to the Imperial doctrine and to consolidate the British interests without derogating from those of the Dutch. The Union Jack must still remain the flag of Union—in the double sense.

## X

# MY TOUR IN SOUTH-WEST AFRICA

THE men who fought in the German South-West campaign and tasted to the full its sands and winds in its bitter wastes used to say that, to punish the foe one ought to give the country back to him. Such sentiments are understandable in part when one has seen the territory and experienced some of its sensations. And yet it has a fascination and a weirdness that lift it from the region of the commonplace. The country excites surprise; it quickens the imagination. What might it not become, you ask, after you have gazed at its scenery, talked to its inhabitants and sensed its strange possibilities. And in that first estimate you are greatly influenced—perhaps without knowing it—by the extraordinary vogue that rumour has, and by the casual statement, unsupported by any evidence. Thus men will take you into their confidence and declare that the country is rich in minerals. Diamonds there certainly are, and they speak as if they were to be had for the asking; gold and silver, they seem to say, are as common as boulders; and there is a great store of copper and tin. Diamonds, of a truth, star the desert, in the most sinister country in the world; copper and tin exist, but the other metals are still to seek—in paying quantities. And yet there are indications enough to tempt the amateur prospector to commit excesses of enthusiasm. He takes you by the sleeve to declare that he has bought a gem of a farm. "All the minerals, my boy—all of 'em."

"Coal?" "Yes; the formation is there, and there is a characteristic gold out-crop in another part of my land. I am certain there are diamonds in the river-bed. Why shouldn't there be? Diamonds are everywhere." He talks in this strain for a while, convincing himself that he is on the verge of colossal fortune, though, goodness knows, there is little warrant for it; but it is in the air. One must surely be on the edge of great happenings, for wealth has come from the most unlikely sources. Stauch, a simple ganger on the railway from Keetmanshoop to Luderitzbucht, found diamonds by the side of the line, and his fortune was made. Might we not do the same? The whisper haunts us. It seems to be borne upon the wind everywhere we go in German South-West.

My impressions of four weeks in the Protectorate are not easily chronicled, because I think of their great diversity, of their conflicting character. My main interest in the country, I frankly admit, was the strangeness of it. Parts of it are absolutely unique. There is, for instance, the great desert of Namib. Imagine several hundreds of miles of bleak desolation and clouds of sand arising when the wind blows, as it does with unexampled ferocity, often for several months on end. Indeed, men in the desert told me that it was only in the summer that it did not blow. Happily, I was spared this experience, for my visit was during the brightest atmospherical conditions. I shall never forget the impressions that bleak and terrible country made upon my spirits when I saw it first in the twilight. It crept up at me and seemed to envelop me like a monstrous thing, something half animate, with hands outstretched to seize, and yet to supplicate—full of an awesome wistfulness. It frightened me; I felt I was being blanketed in sand; blotted out of all individuality. The darkness deepened. The sun set, making strange and wonderful pictures in this great lone land. Mile after mile was passed—always the desert, always the bleak, blank, dreadful region of lost souls, the grave of all ambition. And yet, it has witnessed the birth of a great ambition.

As a set-off against this gloom, I like to recall this story of Stauch, the ganger in charge of native boys over the very railway I am now travelling—a railway that had no meaning except for strategy and the movement of armies, for no commerce passed along it. It crosses the desert from the seaport of Luderitzbucht to Keetmanshoop, a distance of two hundred miles, but it carried no merchandise—only officials, and those same officials built for themselves a large hotel at Seeheim Junction, perched on a rocky hill, where they could wait for trains to take them to Windhuk, the capital of the Province. But to revert to Stauch. He was overlooking his black boys in their daily task of keeping clear the line from the invading sand storms—those monstrous, incessant storms which whirl the sand from the depths of the desert and encroach upon the line until all trace of it is lost for several miles, perhaps. Suddenly a Cape boy came to him, with a curious shining object in his hand. "Look, Boss, here's a diamond." Stauch smiled in a slow, knowing sort of way, and said to the boy: "This is all right; bring some more if you find them, and I'll give you something for yourself." Presently he showed the stone to friends whom he could trust, for he was cautious as well as active. Without saying a word to the railway authorities, or to others whose cupidity might be aroused, he sent the stone to Cape Town for the assay of experts. The answer came back: "A stone of the first water." Stauch's mind was made up. He trekked into the desert with two or three companions chosen for their faithfulness and technical knowledge, and pegged out a claim in the very heart of the great dusty region now given over to sand-mining. It is still known as

Stauch's Lager. Thus came to him the realization of a wonderful dream. Romance had crystallized into diamonds. He, Stauch, had seen the dazzling vision of an El Dorado. Out in the moonlight went his searchers, carrying match boxes in their hands, in which they placed the gems found on the sand. A fabulous fortune was made in a short time. That was only a dozen years ago. Since then many millions of dollars' worth of diamonds have come from those sandy wastes.

That is one aspect of the Protectorate. Another is presented by the ports of Luderitzbucht and Swakopmund. It is commonly said that Luderitzbucht is built of diamonds. In a certain sense this is true, for diamonds gave it its early fortune. Miners came in and threw down their gains on the tables of the hotels. Months of hard work were speedily forgotten in the delights of champagne and the sparkling wines of Germany. Luderitzbucht rises straight out of the sand. The streets are inches deep in disintegrated granite, and when the wind blows, face and hands are cruelly assaulted by a million particles pricking like needlepoints. The little town has no green living thing in it, except some tiny gardens, kept alive by assiduous watering from the condenser, which is one of the institutions of the place. Hotel-keepers charge five shillings for a bath. I was specially favoured, for mine cost only three-and-sixpence, my host remarking that he would use the water for his garden. Nor is even the larger price excessive when one reckons the cost to the consumer. Life is all on this scale in Luderitzbucht—yet the inhabitants are not depressed. They are not weighed down by the sadness of it. None the less, there is no tree or blade of grass. Three valiant cows are kept alive by imported fodder. Milk is hard to get and is a shilling a bottle. It is condensed, like the water, even at that price.

The condenser, which is run by the South African

Railways, is a political personage in Luderitzbucht. Controversy rages about its person, and its ultimate destiny and intentions. I was told by German residents that sometimes the water refused to flow ; there was a break-down in the machinery and the town was without a drop of the fluid. In those circumstances soda water seems to be the substitute. I imagine from what I saw that the inhabitants would not suffer unduly from thirst if the water were stopped.

The town traffic flows along little narrow street railways. To see the town refuse collected and carried off this way gave me the impression of being in a Venice, surrounded by moving sand instead of water, with wheeled gondolas to perform the everyday service. A conflict arose, when I was there, between the Administration and the Town government on the subject of this railway, for the reason that no rent had been paid for it, and the Municipality was debarred from using it. This, I suppose, is one of the acts of high-handedness alleged against the regime. But, in reality, the Germans have few grievances. They admit quite frankly that they are well treated. But the chief desire of Luderitzbucht is to reopen trade with Europe : to re-establish the lines that connect with the Cape, with the East Coast, with Hamburg and London.

In one respect, however, they spoke as if they had been dealt with unfairly. The subject was education, and their accents were intended to excite commiseration. Why had the German teachers been sent away ? They were wanted to instruct the young Germans, for it was unthinkable that they should not be taught their own language. How was it possible to maintain German culture—and the word was uttered with all the old reverence, as if it still unfurled an untarnished banner to the winds—without inculcating German principles of art, literature and science ? Ah, that German culture ! Perhaps I was less moved in that a few hours before, accompanied by a friend, I had navigated Luderitzbucht Bay, passing by Shark Island, where fifteen thousand Hereros—men, women and children—had been sent to die by the Germans. There was no food, and nothing to save them from the elements. I could see the wretched little contrivances of tin which they had put up as shelters from the wind, but thousands perished and their skeletons remain upon the island. That was Germany's way of suppressing a nation which dared to take up arms against her. After that, I did not wonder at the absence of Hereros children, for the women of that tortured nation refused to give birth whilst the Germans were their masters. This was their poor, dumb protest against brutality. As to the remnant of men who remained, they withheld their labour, as far as they could, from the "conqueror." Stories of German administration are staggering in their cruelty. At Keetmanshoop, at the terminus of the line from Luderitzbucht, I saw a lugubrious little building which is known locally as the "Hanging House." It was there that the Germans reasoned effectually with native truculence. If the native was not instantly amenable, he was strung up. Spectacles of this sort were generally reserved for the week-end, and intended as object lessons in German discipline. Last year the fine stone buildings of the Keetmanshoop station were burned down, and in the hollow of one of the stones a high officer of the Union State railway found an official photograph representing a hanging—a row of victims dangling from the gallows.

In the train to Windhuk we had many reminders and sensations of the past and immediate history of the Protectorate. Every bridge over the dry water-courses along which we passed bore evidence of the German thoroughness in destruction. The enemy had tried to blow up these structures when he retired northward, and in many cases nearly succeeded; the repairs had been summarily carried out by the present railway administration. Along the line to Luderitzbucht the Germans had blown up each rail in a certain section. The engineers sawed off the broken ends and joined them together. At Gideon we were touched by the sight of little graves by the side of the line. There had been a small engagement here, and Natal Light Infantry had paid the penalty.

Other impressions were happier, as when we saw excellent beast in the kraals at the various sidings of the stations. This vast region, three times the size of the United Kingdom and as big as the Free State and the Cape Province put together, is truly a "top-hole ranching country," as one farmer put it to me.

What an extraordinary landscape, I thought, as I looked out of my window at mile after mile of semi-desert growing simply small bushes—rarely anything above a foot high—and, in between these little bushes, withered, white-tufted grass. Strange spectacle! I heard a good deal about stock, and, as I say, saw some fine specimens awaiting trucking in the stations. But there were no giant herds on the horizon. Yet our thoughts were largely concerned with cattle; they provided a constant topic of conversation. Along the unfenced extent of line, they wander on the track and get killed. My genial travelling companion, an expert in such things, dwelt humorously on the advantages of the German regime. If animals trespassed and got slaughtered by the locomotive, the owner was fined for obstruction. It reminded me of old Paris days and the story that the victims of taxi-drivers were punished for getting in the way.

In the Union the practice is different. There the railway has to pay compensation when it chews up stock, and advantage is largely taken of the liberality with which an Administration is inclined to liquidate claims of that kind. One old Boer, whose farm is traversed by the railway, sits in the neighbourhood of the line each night with a letter of claim already prepared. He has only to fill in the number of cattle killed to complete the document!

Railwaymen get great sport in these parts, and you may catch the glint of a gun-barrel on every passing trolley. Big game is plentiful in the North. There are "lions by the ton"—so I was told—in the wild region north of Tsumeb and Grootfontein. A few days before my visit, a young coloured boy had met with a perilous adventure. He had gone panther-hunting with a bow and arrow. Suddenly the spoor ceased at the foot of a tree. The young huntsman looked up and saw his quarry on a branch. Before he could use his primitive weapon, the beast was upon him, tearing off his scalp. Happily, dogs, which were with the boy, attacked the panther and pulled him down; and prevented a fatal issue to the encounter. The ex-Administrator has a tender heart for game, and takes no pleasure in the death of thousands of harmless and graceful antelopes. One day, friends sent him a present of buck. In his letter of thanks he said: "I notice your names do not appear amongst those who have licences."

Then there is the story of an old Hereros woman, who frightened away two lions with her cotton umbrella. Kings of the forest do not always live up to their reputation. In this country they are regarded as vermin. Anyone may shoot them, whilst the elephant is almost a sacred beast and requires a stiff licence to hunt him.

Repatriation had its tragi-comedy. It was decreed that all officials, soldiers, teachers and personal followers of the Governor should be repatriated. Added to that were the undesirables, which formed a surprisingly high percentage of the whole. Amongst them were women. At the very outset these people sorted themselves into groups more or less hostile to each other. The chief rivalry lay between the adherents of Colonel

Francke, the Military Commander, and Dr. Seitz, the Governor. The staffs of these two men refused to associate, and maintained this attitude until they arrived in Germany. According to their letters to the head of the German Catholic Mission at Windhuk they found the conditions at home particularly unwholesome and were most anxious to return. Being for the most part Imperialists as well as Catholics, they were obviously out of sympathy with the existing order.

Sometimes, too, surprise and disappointment followed the meeting of husbands and wives who had separated and now came together again. In the interval these estranged couples had formed other attachments and were by no means pleased at the prospect of voyaging together to Germany. In one case a woman had become the companion of a handsome Cape boy, to whom she had borne children. Her embarrassment at the new turn of events was beyond description—especially when she appeared on ship-board with her parti-coloured children.

Another, realizing that she had made a failure of matrimony, tried to escape from the ship and was brought back on a stretcher under military escort. On board, the master of the vessel had taken the measure of his passengers. He knew the kind of treatment suited to each case. To those who had been helpful to the new regime he allotted comfortable quarters. To those who had shown a stiff spirit he was less hospitable. His instructions to the band were amusingly precise: "You will play from 10 a.m. to noon, and again from 4 p.m. to 8. You will not play the 'Wacht am Rhein' or 'Deutschland über Alles,' but anything else." I imagine that voyage to the Fatherland was not exactly a pleasurable experience for the repatriated.

The Prussian spirit dies hard. I had evidence of it when travelling north. We stopped one evening about sunset at a wayside station. The engine had broken down, a not unusual thing—due to after-war conditions—along this little narrow-gauge railway, which is, nevertheless, one of the most successful examples of the kind. At dinner the host deliberately (as it seemed to us) passed by his British guests, accommodated apart, and served only the Dutch and Germans, who were placed at a long table. When his attention was called to it, he coolly observed: "Oh, the cook forgot to count you." He was an ex-Prussian officer, and looked the part, and the tone, cool and impertinent, went with the square head and arrogant air. I fancy he heard something more of the incident, but we got our dinner by dint of a little plain speech. I learned that there had been other complaints against this man and, possibly, before these lines are in print, he will have joined the odd six thousand who were sent back to their Fatherland.

Yet it would not be correct to assume that this spirit is typical amongst the Germans. Most of them have accepted the position with true philosophy. Officials have found them easier to govern than the Dutch or British—especially the latter, who are traditional grumblers. From all parts of the country have come reports of the ex-enemy's exemplary conduct. Yet the British conception of justice to the native is not theirs; for them there is only one way of ruling the black man, and that is by the sjambok. It can alone cure his laziness and ill-discipline. Again, there is apparently some justification for complaints against civil servants. Some, at least, are accused of private speculation and of having profited by the sequestration of German property. But at Windhuk, as at Luderitzbucht and elsewhere, I heard constantly of the good side of the Administration: how tolerant it was, how mindful of the liberties and acquired interests of the Germans. Some admitted that it was pleasant to be rid of German officialdom. The military class, I judge, is not easy to work with. An hotel-keeper at Windhuk told me that he had never dared to ask his officer-guests to pay their debts; they had departed owing him a great deal of money. Had he asked for it they would have resorted to physical means of remonstrance. A chauffeur, who complained of the shortness of his fare, was soon brought to reason by his officer passenger. German military temperament stands no nonsense of that kind.

Germans live in a free atmosphere under the Union Jack, and show by their conduct in public, particularly in the hotels and restaurants, that they suffer from no depression of spirits. To their credit be it said that they have not responded to any extent to the advances of the Dutch Nationalists, who thought they saw in them a valuable means of political action. But the German of the commercial class is a cautious, reasoning soul, and said, not unnaturally, to himself: "Better leave well enough alone." Nevertheless, the self-appointed champions of the Germans in the Union Parliament at Cape Town represent their clients as living under a harsh dictatorship. On the contrary, Sir Howard Gorges, who until recently was Administrator, is a most courteous and considerate man. Stories abound of his accessibility, never-failing patience and his desire to serve. A tall thin man, sartorially remarkable for wearing two waistcoats, he does not give the impression of great physical strength. But of his moral strength I have no doubt whatever. It is shown in his conversation, which is practical and yet instinct with idealism.

Whilst I was at Windhuk he received deputations from the German farmers, complaining that their farm hands, Hereros and Hottentots, were getting out of hand. Nothing could be done with them. They were spoiled because they had been told, by no less a person than the Governor-General himself, that they were the equals of the white man. The Governor-

General did not really say that, but native interpreters seem to have given it that meaning, with the result that the black population were most difficult to manage. Gorges would listen to complaints with the kindliest air of comprehension, and then would say: "I really cannot authorize everyone to take the law into his own hands. Natives can only be punished when offences are proved against them in a court of law." As one of the Government officials said to me: "You cannot turn every German farmer into a Justice, or rather, an in-Justice of the Peace."

Of course, the Administrator's hearers expressed every desire to be strictly constitutional; but it was evident that they were pining for the "good old times," when they could beat the "nigger" as he deserved. At the same time, it may be possible to quicken the action of the law by appointing additional magistrates in country districts. A certain deterioration is visible in the black man; he is not the worker that he was under German compulsion. But that is natural enough. He has lost his head a little with the rapid change of events and his improved status. He has become confused as well as disappointed by the attitude of the new white boss, who talks so eloquently of justice and liberty, and yet has not given him back his country. His elders tell him of the time when England asked permission to cross the territory and sent emissaries to make treaties with the chief. Now the native is told he must work, whether he will or not, unless he has a sufficiency of stock to excuse him from labour. Unconsciously, he has become dependent upon the white "invader." The least disturbance in the latter's affairs has its effect on the native. The white man has become indispensable to the black. For this reason, if for no other, there must be a friendly feeling of co-operation, of mutual aid between the two. Only patience can bring this fully to pass. This was the essence of Sir Howard's policy, as he explained to me in several conversations.

A first view of South-West Africa gives rise to deep disappointment. What an impossible region it seems to be. Portions of the South are hopeless—nothing but the bare desert upon which nothing grows. Its silences are but broken by the scream of the sea-bird. Only hyena seems to brave its far solitudes. Diamonds are there, but they do not make it habitable. In the semi-desert is sparse pasturage for flocks. Strange to say, some of the fattest cattle in Johannesburg market comes from these unlikely regions. But its outer aspect is uninviting. None but optimists would settle there, says the traveller at first view. It requires experience and some stay in the country to learn its secret resources. In the north, where you have a rainfall, the country wears a kindlier look. Trees grow and continuous grass. There is the right sort of moist temperature for maize. That it has good prospects is clear from the Administrator's Report. General Smuts, in his 1920 tour of the territory held that, with the co-operation of all classes, it has hopes of becoming in ten or twenty years one of the foremost States in the Union. It is almost certain to become a great source of supply to the more peopled Provinces. As to whether it can ever equal the Argentine as a cattle-ranching country I do not know. Its qualities for cattle-raising are beyond dispute, but there is the water difficulty. Yet even that can be overcome by enterprise and a judicious expenditure of capital. Prospects, indeed, are very encouraging behind appearances that are deceptive and even intimidating; but in the population are sound elements: German, Dutch and British, which should contribute greatly to the upbuilding of the country.

## XI

# BOTHA'S WORK FOR PEACE

"Jewelled with a people's love,
Golden with a Great Renown."

SAID Botha to an objector in Paris, the year of the Peace: "Do not forget that England is the corner-stone of Western civilization." He never forgot it, himself. It seemed to him inseparable from the rôle of Britain that she should defend the light. If the beacon went out on the soft, rolling hills of England, whence was the world to get its message of clear-eyed, untainted justice, its leading in the paths of Christian concept? He felt that England had to prevent the festering of animosities between nation and nation, whereby mankind was held in bondage to its own suspicions. Suffering in his soul from the sickness of a war and all its horrors, he did instantly decide and prayerfully make vow to support England round the Peace table of Versailles, in the hundred councils of the Quai d'Orsay. That was his purpose, which he steadily maintained during his stay in Paris. He saw the trend of other diplomacies. He saw where they must inevitably lead. He saw the world sinking down again into the grisly shadows of the valley, where millions of young lives were lost; the earth filled again with the noise of weeping, with Rachel mourning for her children and refusing to be comforted. Dread picture which affected his imagination, and which, I suspect, haunted his pillow at night! He felt that England stood against this repetition of horror, this monstrous glut of blood with its attendant miseries. He sensed, assuredly, the greed and avarice of certain of the Allies clamouring for the spoils. Ironically, he saw that some who cried the loudest for the loot had been the least spendthrift of their valour. Now, to-day, their insistence upon the uttermost farthing of reparations was a little shocking in its blatancy to men of moderation.

Botha thought of this, but said little. Probably his pensive eyes (of a blue darker than Smuts') were looking imaginatively at a vision of Rustof, his farm at Standerton, in Cape Province. His heart was there. There seemed no end to the Paris sittings. He had not been well for some time. The close atmosphere of conference rooms tried him intensely—he who had been used to the open veld, to the life of huntsman and farmer. From youth up he had been in the saddle, a gun perpetually in his hand ; his remarkable eyes, true mirrors of his soul, were aglint with battle. He had the amazing eyesight of the Boers. He was able to follow, on the quivering plains, the shadowy, elusive herds of buck, which in colour closely resemble that of the ground. But you and I, looking across the grassy main, would see nothing but the main. Botha's eyes searched the horizon, or perhaps the rocky intermediate spaces, and found what he wanted : food for the rifle. A bullet sang, and ebbing life stained the dun-coloured grass. Botha knew all the exultation of a man who can whisper death from his shoulder on the prairies, though he was no killer for the sake of it, but for to-morrow's meal. His was the true Nimrod's joy, exulting when a wildebeest or a hartebeest lay stretched before him. These pleasures he lacked with office ; they became the rare occasions of his life. No day could be spared from the incessant calls upon his time. He sickened for his sport in the open air and declared, humorously, but with deadly truth, that motor-cars would kill him. His burly form required exercise ; he was never better than on horseback. Friends have told me of the alacrity with which he sprang to horse at the trumpet's blast. In that campaign in German South-West he felt again the throb of life that is the call to arms. A big horse was needed to carry him. His bulk had grown, his girth became portentous ; but, in the saddle, he was king again, lord of his movements—not in prison within the stifling walls of eternal talk, or eternal disputation. How distasteful it was to a man at heart a farmer and no politician, save from the pure duty of it, one will never know, for that secret of his intimate sufferings is written only in private outpourings to his wife. To all the world he kept the smile and look of cheeriness.

His last conscious hours were spent at Standerton, within sight and sound of his beloved herds. His prize sheep, his stud farm, his famous breeds of cattle, were to him the consolation of a life torn from these quiet pleasures by the relentless hand of Fate. He died actually at Pretoria of influenza, which wore out his weakened frame. The Peace which so greatly troubled him had seemed to him to be, at one moment, the predestined hour when the world should beat its swords into ploughshares, its spears into pruning-hooks. Alas, how disappointing was the result. In dying, after a few days of acute illness, with his hands still upon the " controls " of his country, he was at least spared the full knowledge of a tragic failure. That would have pained him to the quick, as I know it has pained General Smuts. A farmer by instinct, a natural taste took him, when he could, to the fields where his youth and early manhood passed, managing the land his father owned. He was, likewise, Louis Botha, of French Protestant descent, by way of Alsace. But though nominally a tiller of the soil and a raiser-up of flocks and herds, in the true pastoral manner, he was something of a townsman and much of a politician. I gather that hours of each day were spent away from the farm on public business, for he was a magistrate amongst other offices, and took a large part in the settlement of local affairs. Since even the most public-spirited must have a bank balance, the future General and his brother managed the farm between them and, together, they contrived to make a success of it, learning meanwhile precious lessons in the art of agriculture and the subtler art of managing black labour.

Louis Botha, senior, had thirteen children, and much of the care of the younger ones fell upon the son, especially as both parents died early, and the General became the head of the family. And a devoted head he proved. Notwithstanding the responsibilities of his Premiership, he found time for those domestic interludes which are the joy of such as labour for the public weal. I like to think of these pleasing traits in his character. At night when official papers snowed him under, he would retire to a topmost room at Groote Schuur, away from the grander office below. There, one by one, the family would steal to him and, without interrupting him, would bid him good night, kissing him on the top of the head where the hairs had begun to thin, or touching softly the hand that held the pen. Botha delighted in this little ritual, and noted the absence therefrom of any of his household, at this time composed of three sons and two daughters and his youngest sister, Miss Marie Botha—to-day the wife of Mr. Hawkin, a London barrister. The Premier would say to those about him: "I can't leave my work, so you must come to me." It was rarely that anyone defaulted from this summons.

He was no autocrat in his own house—or out of it. His public and private manner were the same: always considerate, infused with love. It was so even when he fought upon the field. I know no character on the public stage which was so logical, so "all-of-a-piece" as he. In German South-West he refused to be better lodged than his men. What was good enough for them would do for him. And so when they proposed superb quarters, he chose a private's tent. That was typical of the man. His consideration for the enemy was extraordinary, and not a little exasperating to some who fought. Many months after, they told me, on my visit to the South-West, that he would bring the enemy to his knees by superior guile, and then let him go. In a sense it was true. Botha did not believe in bloodshed as a cure for any ills. He fought lustily when he must—beyond that he would not go. No slaughter for the sake of "an example." Gore had no attraction for him. He might have seemed pitiably weak to a Carson, but he would have cured the Irish of their hate. He believed that the Sermon on the Mount was more potent than the deadliest bombs. One destroyed hatred and the other created it, and, moreover, force always kills those who resort to it. No bitter-ender was he, no rancorous Protestant of the North—nor yet a revolutionary with a bloody mind. He strove for peace even with arms—that is the wonder of it. And the miracle happened. Rebels and Germans in the South-West laid down their arms, almost without a fight. The "scraps" were insignificant. The perfervid upholders of "glorious war" were scandalized. Where were the classic rules of the game? Botha was making a mockery of war, a mere game of chess, with scarcely a drop of blood in it.

Yes, that was it—no blood. Then the breach would be healed so much the quicker. He wanted no memories of dead sons, no agonized looks at the vacant chair on Peace night. That is what he was working for. Did he succeed? Beyond all expectation. Triumphant was the success of a bloodless campaign. The rebels were outplayed by superior force and generalship, and went to prison, or back to their private affairs, according to their consequence and responsibility in the movement. Germans were cornered—hopelessly outnumbered—and gave in. To the world's astonishment, they retained their rifles and the officers their swords. When Botha was remonstrated with, he said: "They have fought honourably; I will give them an honourable peace—but no ammunition." When Earl Buxton visited the country, shortly before my own tour of it, the Germans came in deputation to him to thank him for Botha's magnanimity. They had at least reached the stage of being grateful. And so to Botha is credit for the spectacle, for gods and men, of a German returning thanks. Botha's idea was to knit the country into one—to make it whole and harmonious. The rebels were still the citizens of the Union, the Germans would be so on the morrow. Thus he insisted that his Dutch burghers should be the agents in disarming their own kith and kin. In acting thus he had in his mind's eye the feeling that would be left after the campaign. If the Dutch played policemen on their brothers and locked up the naughty ones, there was little to be said. Vastly different if the rod were held in British hands! This is the policy of healing.

But it must not be supposed that Botha was tender to the Germans to the point of sacrificing national interest. Far from it. Though the combatants received the honours of war, they received little else. They were all banished to Germany amidst lamentations, as you will see in another chapter. Army reservists, every official person, had to go, down to the humblest schoolmaster. The population was reduced by half, which, if not bloodthirsty, is at least drastic. Botha was not weak. May be, he was injudicious, sometimes, in his treatment of men who were little better than traitors. Perhaps Smuts has chosen the better way: the sharp crack of the whip instead of the dulcet notes of a flute. And, indeed, I feel that in respect of the later stages of the Rebellion, and in the chronic form it has taken of Separatism, Smuts was sounder in his surgery, laying

ENGLISH GRAVES AT SWAKOPMUND

GENERAL BOTHA WITH LORD BUXTON

bare the bones of a conspiracy, than the milder-mannered statesman. But we must be wholly just to his illustrious shade. Botha was no craven to yield to political menace, even when it came from his own household in the faith; he had, certainly, the soldierly instinct and the soldierly mind. He proved it by passing his Military Service Act. Thus, at the outbreak of the great struggle, he was ready for it. The military machine was in order; it was only necessary to pull the lever. Contrast that picture of the strong young man armed and moving swiftly to meet the enemy, with the loud beating of the drum in England, the flaming posters, the semi-comic incidents of a popular appeal. Botha had, indeed, the military brain, that priceless gift of looking into your enemy's mind and reading what was there. He divined plans. It was apparent enough in the Boer war, when he succeeded Piet Joubert, who, aged and worn, made war too softly for the stalwarts. And when Botha, still in the thirties, was invested with supreme command, no greybeard quarrelled with the choice. They knew this lovable young man possessed the art of leadership.

There is another kind of Botha that I find extremely human: the Botha of the up-country farm, the Botha of the obscure Boer, calling him friend and brother, putting an arm round his shoulder, using his familiar local name, and ending up by asking how the little ostriches were doing. And Botha at a farm-house explaining his position: that is a delightful scene. I judge from their grim faces that they have taken the visitor to task for being "too English." That was often a complaint with the back-veld. Botha replies with conciliation. He feels the cold douche and tries to warm the air. How charming that talk is, so simple, so homely in its illustrations. You begin to see how uncomplicated, how utterly without pretence is the man who talks. He tells them in plain language what he thinks about it all ; what he feels ; and they listen in spite of themselves. Presently, emotion wells up into the speaker's throat. He stays a moment to draw a handkerchief from his rough tweed coat to wipe his eyes. And, had you been peeping in, you would have seen the audience weeping, too. He continues talking until they come to him, irresistibly drawn by a subtle force. They fall upon his shoulders. He embraces them. They are a happy family once more, receiving the visit of an honoured, welcome guest. That is Botha, and the power of him. It explains his position on the veld. None is too humble to attract his notice, even when he is leaving a Cabinet meeting. He will single out some old, dishevelled friend to shake him by the hand, to pass the time of day. His colleagues, perhaps, would never have observed that he was there.

Mrs. Botha, still handsome, is the great granddaughter of Thomas Addis Emmett, the Irish leader, and for long she bore the ancient feud of a Celtic people. It flamed out in the Boer war and caused her to weep when, at its conclusion, the British flag floated over Pretoria. She gave up church-going (she is of the Episcopal faith) when the English parson prayed for the defeat of her husband's people. Perhaps she had not reflected that the Dutch Reformed Church went much farther in denunciation. Botha took the Premiership from Lord Selborne's hands and bowed his head in prayer over his responsibility—much as Lincoln did in a similar crisis in his career. Jehovah answered the supplication, making Botha the great link in the pacification of the country, joining Boer to Briton and Briton to Boer. How came it that the simple-minded Scotsman, Campbell-Bannerman, of no great parts it seemed, was so inspired, in the teeth, mind you, of official views, to bestow upon the defeated but still undaunted race the care of its own destinies ? What wisdom in the act, what sublime confidence in the workings of eternal justice. Botha was the repository of that confidence. It was never betrayed. Then, ten years later, came the Act of Union with Botha as protagonist. He wrestled in spirit with opposition, attacking extremists on his own side, and quieting the fears of Natal. That blessed word " Referendum " did the deed. The great departed, one of the lords of the nation, merits his coming statue in the streets of Durban, fashioned out of freestone brought from his native Greytown. For by a freak of fortune he was citizen, by birth, of the Garden Colony.

The two sovereign nations under his guidance now blend their ancient fame, and share the prestige of their historic fights for liberty. " Forth from a mighty past they came," now forth to a mighty future they march, shoulder to shoulder.

> " Fair fruitful realms, wherein all discords cease
> Beneath the reign benign of golden-sceptred peace."

## XII

# A SCENE IN THE KARROO

THE grey desolation of the Karroo in a drought is something that can scarcely be imagined by those who have not seen it. There is no hope in the land, no green and living thing, no food for man or beast. The water-courses are bone dry. The porous, chocolate-red soil has long ago licked up any moisture there might be. Water-holes have given out, resulting in death to stock. It is a parched and miserable land, mocked by the pitiless sun and the brass-bound sky. The thirsty earth drinks what it can and rejects the rest. Tiny rivulets become raging torrents. The transformation takes place under our very eyes. The trickle develops into a broad and raging flood. Magical is the change in verdure effected. The grey bushes and the tufts of ghostly, withered grass, which offer but derisive nourishment to the cattle, have become sweet and edible. Bright-hued flowers, as luxuriant as in an Alpine garden in spring, have sprung up where was nothing before but bare, worn patches in between most melancholy-looking shrubs. The earth has conceived and put forth tender things, spreading a green carpet to the very edge of the ironstone hills which border the plain. Listen to the soft tinkle of water—music indeed to ears grown weary of the dry rustle of the drought. The farmer's face, which tells of suffering: the wrinkled eyes, the mouth that has the habit of shutting tightly as if to exclude the particles of sand that eddy madly from the parched earth, has to-day a new colour in it. The rain has come to save him from utter despair. Unto a death-bed scene has come the glad message of awakening life. The velt rejoices and sings aloud. The stock will have food now : the neurasthenia of its owner will disappear. Perhaps he will argue that there is compensation even for a drought in the enhanced price of beef and mutton.

Thus you will realize that the greatest need in the Karroo is water. Yet only a couple of inches may fall in the entire year. On the other hand, many inches may descend with direful suddenness, as if the bottom of the sky had fallen out and a new deluge had come upon the earth. Such waters as cannot be absorbed by the famished land rush underground or get carried to the sea. Conservation of water is the very essence of the problem. If only you can catch the flood and store it against the time when no moisture falls, then you have gone a long way to solve the most pressing of South Africa's needs. For the soil is bountifully rich and refuses nothing when once the rain has fallen. The irony of it is that it is withheld for so many months in this vast, potentially fertile region. It is as barren as a rock, though by the grace of rain it might resemble an orchard in the Old Country for fruitfulness. True, the Karroo possesses plants of special properties which store up water for months ; and a cactus with leathery fingers and glutinous content which, when sliced, serves to feed cattle in the driest period ; but, even so, the strain is dreadful, and the earth, beneath the hard, grudging sky, cannot support her cherished children. Rain-clouds hover a moment, but heedless of the parched plain, pass on.

And so the chief concern is to make provision—not for a rainy day, but for a day when it does not rain. Thus are the familiar conditions reversed in more senses than one. The Smartt Syndicate, Ltd., has settled the problem for itself. Established at Ercildoune, fifteen miles west of Britstown, and thirty from De Aar, an important junction on the Cape system of South African railways, it has gone into business as scientific farmer. That is why out of the dry and dusty plains of the Karroo, with its tufted grass and salt-bush, there is suddenly revealed a great expanse of greenery. Here is practised agriculture of the most promising and admirable sort, in the heart of the dry country. This is no mere oasis, but the capture of the desert and its subjection to the work of producing food. Such a scheme has more than local significance. If it succeeds, it means that the problem of food-production, which is troubling the world and provoking disorder, is passing away, for here is land and to spare and only water needed to grow all the crops desired. Again, there is an acutely patriotic reason why we should wish to see the desert fruitful : the desire to settle the returned soldier on the land. Granted that our remedies are tried and trustworthy and not merely the creatures of our dreams, then the millions of acres of the wild can be reclaimed and harnessed to the service of man. The Smartt Syndicate has established a dam to hold back the storm waters of the River Onger. And so strong is it that it successfully resists assaults upon it. Such trial came two years ago, when the rains descended and the floods battered against the masonry. But it stood firm, and the spillways received the excess ; for weeks together the tumbling, raging waters raced harmlessly away. You must picture a broad and placid-looking lake about the size of Windermere, some nine miles long by three or four in breadth, set in the midst of the Karroo. Never were the eyes of a traveller in the sandy wastes more agreeably refreshed by a mirage. Happily, the picture is real—real as the barbel which haunt its waters, and which have destroyed the trout ; real as the geese and wild duck that fly overhead. The little islands in the lake look rather cold and repellent, for they are of shale, and there is no vegetation upon them. Indeed, a lack of trees is one of the defects of the scene, which otherwise is not without its charm, if only for the blue veils drawn about the flat-topped hills, beyond an expanse of veld. Near at hand iron-stone kopjes sentinel the shore.

The water from the great lake, which covers 6000 acres and contains 4,000,000,000 cubic feet, is turned into a canal some four feet deep and twice as broad, which flows at business-like speed through the estate, despatching its watery messengers on every hand. These furrows or tributaries feed the fields by the time-honoured method of the hatch, which is lifted or lowered according to need. The water is led over the flats by natives who are trained to the work.

Below the lake is a broad valley of rich, alluvial soil, only awaiting its share of liquid to blossom as the rose. The valley is not shut in by precipitous sides, but is a broad, generous expanse of varying width, rimmed by the iron-stone hills. The land is naturally level, and scarcely requires the leveller of the steam-plough, and so free from stones that you could not find one, as the Manager, Mr. J. H. Mugglestone, humorously remarks, " to throw at a snake." This condition prevails for some thirty feet down.

Eighteen thousand bags (200 lb.) of wheat have been taken off the 4000 acres under this cultivation. Wheat is the banner-crop, and if there were fifty Smartt Syndicates carrying on such a work, South Africa would never need to beg for bread from the Argentine or Australia. The crop on the Smartt Syndicate estate could feed Johannesburg for two months. The area under irrigation will be eventually increased to 12,000 acres. Of the 6000 now watered from the dam, one-third is given to lucerne, a highly profitable crop at £10 per ton. Wheat is just as handsomely remunerative at 70s. a bag ; the normal price is not half that. World shortage is responsible for the former figure.

Lucerne pays as a market commodity and as feed for cattle and pigs. Six cuttings a year are possible, and upon the remnants of the crop an army of pigs flourish and grow fat. I saw Berkshires by the hundred wandering over the lands, their flesh looking firm and good. Sent alive to Johannesburg, they make £8 apiece. Lucerne baled represents one of the great industries of the estate ; indeed, my first sight of its activities was a wagon drawn by sixteen spruce-looking donkeys and loaded with the vivid green wares. Donkeys contrive, almost miraculously, to pick up a living in this unlikely land. No patch seems too bare for them. They provide the cheapest transport in the Karroo and yet, sad to say, they have no market price. It is the same with ostriches, which grow their finest plumes in vain, for fashion disregards them. Pigs, though less romantic-looking, are far more profitable. There is no live stock as cheap to feed or less troublesome than they if you have free grazing to offer them.

From the top of the iron-stone kopjes, where the ostriches roam and unshod horses learn to get iron legs from their encounter with hard stones, you may spy out the land and learn how richly varied it is. The kindly looking red soil is upturned by the plough ; the last rays of the setting sun illumine a stand of mealies and turn them to old gold, burnishing, too, the sleek hides of the oxen feeding upon the stubble. Near by, in a lucerne field, swine are nosing amongst the remnants of the crop. Over yonder a steam cultivator is tearing up the subsoil. As it moves along its great furrow, it resembles a prehistoric animal, ponderously progressing across the plains. Here and there the flat expanse is fringed with trees, but in general there is an absence of them. Gums, pepper-trees, beech-wood, fir-trees and cedars, cypresses, tamarisks, and even fruit-trees, such as apple, quince and fig, serve as wind-screens and as shade for the hot days.

A cold wind takes pounds off sleek cattle and even the fat of sheep hardens in a low temperature.

Stock is a great feature of the estate. There are some 17,000 head of it. The greater number are goats, sheep and pigs. Merinoes number 12,000, Persians 2000, the Angoras another 2000, and pigs a thousand. All three are of the best strains, but the Angoras, like the ostriches, are awaiting the "turn of the tide." Their silky fleeces are in little demand. The Persians, with their neat black stockings, are, perhaps, the best type of sheep for the high veld. Mr. Mugglestone sets great store on good shepherding. The sheep go away in the charge of a youthful herd for several days at a time; then they are driven back again to the kraal and counted. When food is plentiful, the shepherd's lot is not unhappy, but when famine stalks the land he is the most harassed of mortals. Sheep counting is not come by by everyone, but practice makes it automatic. The mind ticks off the number, without the aid of fingers or stones, and presents the unfailing total to the memory. Blood stock does not run with the common herd on the high veld, but has paddocks of its own with a good supply of fresh water from the main source. The most famous cattle are the Red Polls, which form a handsome group as they stand, knee-deep, in the shallows of a pond. They have won prizes in many shows. At Bloemfontein, in 1919, they won four first, and three championships. Shorthorns are also bred, but there is a tendency to specialize in Red Polls. The prices obtained range from £45 to £150.

Blood stock among the horses is at the Houewater end of the estate, some twenty miles from the great dam. Here are Suffolk Punches and Percherons, which would raise the enthusiasm of any stock breeder.

But the productivity of the soil is our main concern, for even arid lands can raise herds. Of the quality of the crops, there can be no question. I heard nothing of rust or smut in the wheat, and the corn-cobs were well filled. Labour has been judiciously handled, and gives no trouble. The Manager believes in anticipating the wishes of his native hands and thus secures their good-will. When prices began to rise after the War, they came to him, complaining of the high cost of living and asking for increased wages. He replied by offering to supply them with their food and blankets and the other things they needed at cost price. It is true that it meant a loss to the Syndicate of something like £1,200 a year, but it has been worth while in the contentment of the hands. Sometimes, the selling price is below cost ; the intention, generally, has been to establish pre-War prices. In the case of flour, the store on the estate has sold at 4s. 6d. the bucket (25 lb.)—exactly half the local market rate. Meat is retailed at 9d. the lb. —also well below the current price. Other articles are in proportion, and there is a plentiful supply of cheap milk. The workers on the farm, white as well as black, and their dependents, numbering in all four hundred, profit by this arrangement. It is pleasant to see the store fulfilling the important function of keeping everybody clothed and fed at a reasonable price. The high cost of living has, therefore, little effect here ; it passes harmlessly by. There is school provision also, and it is gratifying to Britons to hear the National Anthem sung by piccaninnies under the direction of a teacher who graduated from the Lovedale Institute, the Presbyterian College for Natives. This attempt to satisfy the wants of the black man is evidently fully appreciated ; each shining black face met in the course of the day's wanderings about the estate seemed to reflect contentment.

Mr. Mugglestone explained that any argument based on economics would not impress his coloured constituents. " If I were to tell them that the world-price for mutton was a shilling a pound, they would not be convinced. 'Is it not your sheep?' they would say. 'Did it not grow here? The grass is cheap and you pay no more for labour; why should you charge more, then, for the meat?'" To them it is unanswerable that the sheep consumes no more and therefore cannot be a greater expense. A world market-price! Fudge and fiddlesticks! Being myself one of the long-suffering public, daily exploited by the middle-man, I confess that I feel deep sympathy with the black man's simple reasoning. Until prices came tumbling down, from various world causes, the trader was growing richer and his customers poorer—whatever the pure logic of the case.

Both national and imperial interests are involved in the experiment—national in the sense of conquering the waste places of South Africa, imperial in that it provides land for the returned soldier or for the disinherited. Cattle-ranching is no occupation for the poor man, since a minimum of £4000 is required. But the small settler can live well on an irrigated plot of, say, thirty acres. He can grow lucerne in paying quantities, for he cuts six times a year, and the ground bears one and one-fourth tons per acre. In addition, he may have pigs and poultry and milch cows, which he feeds on part of his lucerne. Thirty acres should suffice to give him an income of, say, £700 or £800 a year. If he is more ambitious, he can take sixty acres, and thus increase his prospects. Of course he has to pay for his land, but the terms are easy. Probably the first payment will not exceed £5 an acre and the instalments will be spread over many years; in the end, he gets freehold. Moreover, there is no waiting for the crop to grow, with possible disappointment and the fact of dwindling resources, for it is already established on the land and will soon be ready for the reapers.

If land, under profitable conditions, can be found for soldiers who have served their country, then is a great patriotic end achieved. And Sir Thomas Smartt, head of the Syndicate, as well as the old Unionist leader in Parliament, is the man to achieve that, for he has the heart and understanding to minister to his fellows.

To house the settler is also one of the great concerns of the Syndicate. Probably the home will be constructed of " pisé de terre "—earth-bricks pressed to hardness between boards—a common substance for building in South Africa. Transport should offer no great difficulty, for the railway is but ten miles off at one end of the estate and touches it at the other. Some co-operative scheme will be devised, no doubt, whereby the little colony of settlers can get produce carried to the station by the agency of mule or donkey teams, until the conquering motor monopolizes all such work.

In my mind's eye I see a settlement of soldier-farmers with neat houses, byres and barns built on the hillside above their watered lands upon which is wheat or maize or lucerne. What a picture is conjured up of harvest-time : dark-faced women and children stooping in a vivid blue sea of lucerne, which stretches to the hills and is streaked with the purple of seed-time.

Probably one of the effects of irrigation will be to make the flow of rivers perennial by reason of the drainage from the watered land. Hence the area of usefulness of the scheme will be considerably enlarged, for the water can serve its turn again. What an amazing prospect is opened up of a Karroo blossoming with corn lands and with vast areas of verdant pasture supporting its myriad cattle. Hitherto, it has been regarded as little better than a desert. Then will pass for all time the horror of the drought. No more shall we see the death of hundreds of lambs in the lambing season, for there will be food in plenty. Only last year herds perished because there was no food for them. If the great work of conservation goes forward, it will increase the food resources of the world. To hold the precious dew of heaven in the stony bosom of the iron hills is to perform a service to mankind which utterly transcends the immediate purposes of the project. For, in the enlargement of such schemes is famine routed, the slum dweller given opportunities of god-like work beneath a clear blue sky, instead of soulless labour in a fetid den, and, finally, the demon of unrest is exorcised by the healthful task of coaxing the green earth to put forth its choicest fruits. Morally and materially, the gathered cloud-burst of the great reservoir carries healing in its shadow.

## XIII

# A STUDY OF CECIL RHODES

> "Living, he was the land,
> And dead, his soul shall be her soul."

I THOUGHT to write a book on South Africa without Rhodes, but it was impossible. No sooner had my ox-wagon begun to rumble across the veld than he emerged from the shadows and took a place by my side. Of his rapturous conversation, but little remains—only his insistence upon a strong South Africa. I gathered that he approved most heartily of the coming together in the Union, that he realized the beauty and significance of this attempt to join up the broken ends of racialism. I heard his sonorous approval of Smuts as a man after his own heart in breadth of vision, in his worldly lore, in ability to see, prophetically, what lay in front of him. He seemed to find comfort at the presence of Jameson in the shades—Jameson, who neighboured him, in the Matoppos. Oh, the magnificent loneliness of that burying ground ! Just those two and the Wilson cenotaph to the memory of heroes. Yet the Matabele (I gathered from a local guide) disputed the right of anyone to share the last resting-place of him who was to them a king amongst men. They remembered his intrepid going and coming amongst them : how he encamped for weeks that he might parley with the chiefs. There was a little brandy, notwithstanding the penalty of it, in these conversations and, in the end, Rhodes triumphed, getting what he wanted ; but it had taken him six weeks to accomplish it. During that time he was in danger of assassination, but he recked little of that. He thought only of the object to be attained. All these things we remember to-day in looking abroad over the country for which he gave his all : his magnificent courage, his grand impulses towards a larger and majestic life. He himself intrigued for her, did many foolish things for her with always the thought that the dear Mistress would be benefited and her position strengthened.

He was not a man who gave himself freely to others. Though he expanded towards his intimates, he had reticence for the others : a rugged and stony silence, a kind of awkward aloofness. He had no small talk, no social gifts. He was not eloquent in the ordinary sense ; words came to him with difficulty. It was the emotion behind them that made them of great effect. The Boers understood, though he could only address them through an interpreter. But they realized the man behind the intermediary. They seemed to know also that Rhodes felt as they felt about things. He looked at the country as they looked at it. Though he had the eyes of a visionary, the brain of a statesman, he had the heart of a farmer. He loved the land. That is where they joined hands. Jameson was the human being he loved best in the world. The Scottish doctor seemed to have found some road to his heart that others thought mislaid in the search for gold. That quest gave him the companionship of men unworthy, intellectually, to untie his shoe-laces. But he used them for his purpose that he might spend the money gained on grandiose schemes. For it is wrong to assume, as some have done, that he loved the precious metal for its own sake. He was a poet and a dreamer, compounded with a farmer : no man of business, no born juggler with millions. His financial associates, neither distinguished for patriotism nor for private virtue, helped him to gain money for the vast projects for which his great soul craved. Beyond that, he had no use for them. Indeed they were comically incapable of understanding the sublimity of his musings, his fierce desire to see England great and to carry her civilizing influence across the dark regions of the earth. " All Red," he would say, laying a caressing hand on Rhodesia, " All Red for 450,000 square miles ! " He loved maps. They spoke so eloquently, and yet so simply, of mountains, plains and rivers. It was like being borne along swiftly in the air.

A Durban lady told me of having met Rhodes as a quite young man when he was returning to Oxford on her ship. He was distinguished from his companions by his good looks and a quiet dignity of manner. He was attractive, this lady and her husband thought : serious without being pompous. Years after they met again, this time in Durban. Rhodes had not forgotten ; his memory was extraordinary, as this lady was to know. He spoke of Rhodesia, of its engaging possibilities. The lady listened, fascinated by his enthusiasm. Then she adventured a plea for a young man who wanted a post. " Is he worthy ? " asked Rhodes simply. When assured that he was, Rhodes said : " Very well, then, I will give him a chance." He took no note, and might well have forgotten the whole thing. But, instead of that, he summoned the young man to Rhodesia, gave him a post, and to-day he is an important official.

His friendship with Jameson was unique in his life—that lonely life that no woman's love had touched. When Groote Schuur, his lovely house near Cape Town burned, through the thatched roof catching fire, his first thought was for the doctor. Was he safe ? The treasures of the house were of secondary concern—the marble clock which ticked away the ennui of Napoleon at St. Helena ; the golden vessels from Zimbabwe Ruins (in his beloved Rhodesia) which represent so much mystery in the history of the continent. But, in his anxiety, Rhodes cared for none of these things or for the Latin masterpieces which he had had translated and bound, still in their typewritten state, in red morocco and encased in shelves of expensive Indian teak. He was secretly proud of this collection, though he stopped it when they tried to give him the Fathers of the Church! Jameson's predominance in the Raid made it an almost sacred enterprise in the sight of Rhodes. None but he would have survived it. But so egregious an enterprise was bound to fail. Considering the ineptitude of it, the wonder is that any escaped. Imagine the spectacle of Johannesburg sacked and burned by the Boers. I asked the shade of Rhodes, in our twilight confidences, the secret of all this. If I can remember aright, the pallid lips faltered a little. At that tragic hour in his life, his health had failed him. Events, both public and private, had taxed his moral equilibrium. His judgment had deserted him. That was the effect of it. And then he hinted at wrong information. The cry of " the women and children in danger " was a false cry. With all their defects, the Boers did not make war on the weak and helpless. No doubt " Dr. Jim " was influenced by the news from the Rand. I gathered that the Reformers were ready to kill Kruger " with their mouths," but were less ready to shoulder guns.

Rhodes was the strangest compound of ruthlessness with pity. Of the ruthlessness there were many stories. One day he heard that a private " enemy " was to travel by a certain ship. He appears to have suggested to a friend, travelling by the same vessel, to throw the obnoxious one overboard. And Rhodes' accent seemed to betray a real desire to that end. It was one of his foibles to feel outrageously aggrieved in a bitter, personal sense at any thwarting of his plans. Such who opposed him were actuated, he was sure, by private spite, by a desire to pull him down. To his sensitiveness to attack is to be attributed his curious reliance upon people who flattered him. He was not susceptible to the grosser forms of flattery, but he would brook no contradiction. This accounts for his tendency to surround himself with inferior spirits, who pandered to this infirmity of a noble mind and simulated a deference which they did not always feel. Rhodes had no great grasp of business. I doubt if he had much genius for the Stock Exchange, and details, generally, whether of the gold or diamond fields, escaped him. But he had imagination. He saw splendid opportunities and dreamed dreams that came true because of his compelling personality. That is why his business associates clung to him, though they did not understand him. There was "money in him"—in those big flights of fancy which took him into the regions of high finance and made him deal with millions as if they were mere pawns in a game. But that which distinguished him from other creators of new worlds was the intense practicality of his visions. They seemed to touch the clouds, but their ends rested upon earth. However high his kites soared, they never got out of hand.

His negotiations with Barney Barnato for the control of the diamond output was a brilliant example of his particular gifts. He hypnotized Barnato, and the preternaturally sharp Jew found himself yielding to this master-mind, which could inspire, enthuse, cozen, intimidate, fascinate and subdue all in the time it took two thirsty souls to consume a bottle of champagne. And so, after a protracted sitting, Barney gave in to the superior powers of Rhodes, to the fascination of an intellect that he could not resist, for it penetrated all his defences, which were only calculated to defy all ordinary men. And Cecil Rhodes was not ordinary. Therein lay the secret of his resistless force with those who boasted they could rig the market and who, by supreme bluff and surpassing powers of cajolery, got what they wanted. But not against Rhodes. The history of the absorption of the Barnato group in the De Beers was just that of a midnight sitting. Barney afterwards said he never could explain it, and doubtless that was true. Rhodes, the wizard, had got over him somehow. It was one of his most dazzling exploits to have joined in a single vast undertaking the two great diamond-getters—De Beers and the Barnato group. It made De Beers omnipotent. Rhodes' brain conceived the *coup*. His vivid imagination became fired with the gigantic possibilities of it.

Rhodes was master of men and master of diamonds with which men deck those for whom they fight and live and love. It was like this Builder of South Africa to desire a symbol of his triumph. "I want to see a bucket of diamonds," sighed Rhodes, perhaps after a little Roederer or Veuve Clicquot had loosened the conversation. And Barnato, being flattered, acquiesced. A bucket was brought and the diamonds poured into it. Rhodes passed his hands through the gems, luxuriating in the sensation of letting them run through his fingers. But, practical ever, even in his reverie, he called in a photographer, and the scene was fixed for ever: the two diamond magnates and the bucket between them.

Rhodes was kind to an amazing degree. The explanation of his lavish gifts to everybody is a classic in Rhodesian literature. "One day a fellow asked me for some money; told me he had nothing to eat. I didn't believe him. Didn't like his face, I said. Didn't give him anything. That night he committed suicide." The founder of Rhodesia certainly took care that no one subsequently should end his days for the same cause. A solicitor came to him one day. "What do *you* want?" asked Rhodes, a little astonished at the type of applicant. "Four hundred pounds," said the other. "If I don't have it, I shall have to leave the neighbourhood; I cannot continue." Rhodes made out the cheque without a word. Months later, he received back the amount to his utter astonishment. " What a damned fool ! " he exclaimed ; " he sends me back my money ! What am I to do with it ? " and he turned, frankly puzzled, to his secretary. Such a thing had never occurred to him before. Finally, he handed the cheque to his assistant with the remark : " Give that to the next beggar who is hard up." " I might have applied the money to myself," said the gentleman in question, in telling me the story, " but I never did. I never could ask him for anything—consequently I never got it."

Rhodes tried to introduce nightingales to the beautiful garden of Groote Schuur. They would bring beauty and liquid song, he felt, into that unrivalled vista of flowers, trees and mountain. But the nightingales died. They could not stand the voyage from England. And each day, at the death of one of his pets, Rhodes brought the body and laid it with infinite tenderness on the table before a group of friends, saying: "Poor little thing. Another gone ! "

How he loved that glorious site upon which Groote Schuur stands at Rondebosch ! Every inch of it seemed an expression of his soul. I heard an anecdote which illustrated that. It was difficult to get Rhodes into the house, again, after Groote Schuur had burned and was rebuilt. He camped in the garden and seemed indisposed to leave it. " Oh," said a sagacious friend, " you must think of this glorious prospect. You can't ruin it with your tent." " No, I suppose not," admitted Rhodes.

That night he returned to the house. It is doubtful, however, whether he could sleep much within doors at this time, for his heart was fatally affected. This explains why, to the end of his days, he preferred roughing it in the open. There he could breathe.

He was not really " uncivilized," but certain persons bored him unutterably. His secretary had a bad

ON THE SMARTT SYNDICATE FARM, KARROO

RHODES' TOMB ON THE LONELY MATOPPOS

quarter of an hour " the morning after " Rhodes stayed with certain friends up-country. " Why did you leave me alone with that woman ? " he snapped, and it transpired that the hostess had buttonholed Rhodes on behalf of her husband, engaged at one of his concerns. Rhodes was furious at the bad taste, and left as early as possible next morning with scarcely a " thank you." He never visited that house again, though husband and wife had been old acquaintances. It was because of this buttonholing that Rhodes was shy of the sex. It was dangerous to like them, he felt, because they grew so distractingly persuasive when interested in someone. To a lady he said, " I have been accused of hating women. It isn't true, but I have had no time for them." Then feeling that he had not expressed himself gracefully, he added : " With you it's different. You speak like a man. I enjoy your conversation." A member of the circle which sat constantly on the stoep with Rhodes at Groote Schuur remarked that one of the feminine visitors to the house was very good-looking. " Yes, I suppose she is," said Rhodes, slowly. " I never thought of it before."

Poor Rhodes ! He seemed to miss much that was gracious in the world by reason of a temperament that gave him no peace, that urged him on perpetually. Like a troubled spirit flying over the deeps of human experience, he seemed to have no rest for the sole of his foot until the eternal repose of the Matoppos.

## XIV

# THE CHARM OF RHODESIA

POLITICALLY a battle-ground, Rhodesia is physically and socially one of the most attractive parts of the British Empire. Yet by the circumstances of the case, by a species of alien government, if you will, here is a vast country with a slender population of forty thousand persons clamouring to run its own affairs, and has said so in a referendum. Such a spirit, of course, is typical of the times, of that type of masterful mind which accepts with difficulty any thwarting of its dear desires.

As you travel about Rhodesia, revelling in its vast spaces, even if you are a little depressed by the monotony of the scenery, your mind will invariably turn to the question of self-government, perhaps because it is never long out of the conversation of your fellow-travellers. There is a feeling of resentment apparent because official England is disinclined to allow this claim for self-government. How can so small a community protect itself from the attempts of any foreign Power to annex it ? Even though there is, perhaps, little actual risk, there is always the potential danger, human ambitions being what they are. But Rhodesia, I am bound to say, has no apprehensions. I find such calm acceptance of crushing responsibilities peculiarly British. And British to the core is the country that the genius of Rhodes acquired for the Empire. Part of this desire for responsible government springs from the conviction that under

Chartered rule the country is not going forward as it should. And yet the impartial observer must feel, I think, that the Company's administration is not as black as it is painted and that, indeed, it has redeeming qualities. None the less, Rhodesia is convinced, and so expresses herself by popular voice, that she is quite as able as a board sitting in London to look after her own affairs. That is really the crux of the situation. The over-lordship, such as it is, is an absentee lordship, and there is always some objection to that in the minds of free peoples. Very few members of the board ever make a long stay in the country and thus get acquainted at first hand with local opinion. Then, again, on the fiscal question, there is a good deal to be said. Here the country is being run practically on its own resources. " No money is being spent on public enterprises by the company," declare the inhabitants, " and hence there is no necessity for the continuance of a regime which means nothing to us."

The country is being starved in a hundred ways, they will tell you—starved because so little is being done to advance those educational causes which are as dear to them as to the other members of the far-flung Empire. Education is, indeed, the bitterest cry of this scattered and yet intensely vital community, which has carried the bravest British ideals into the great spaces of a new world. But let us say at once that the Company's administration, though it suffers from the vice of a commercial enterprise harnessed to the larger needs of government, is not a money-grubbing concern. It is notorious that as a trading venture it has not made profits. But that it has honestly striven to do its duty and assist in the moral and material development of the country I find many proofs. Indeed, its treatment of the natives seems to me to be near perfection. There is a very interesting scheme afoot, into which I had the opportunity of enquiring, which is intended to save the native from being exploited for commercial ends. This is a project to teach the black, through qualified teachers, his own native arts. Those arts can reach such a stage of development that they become real instruments of culture. Basket-making, pottery, and some forms of furniture-making are readily acquired by the native, for they come so close to his natural accomplishments. Thereby he becomes an artisan of the mediæval type, taking pleasure in his own productions. He is induced by the larger remuneration which comes to him, because of the better quality of his wares, to continue his studies and to increase his output. Self-respect, he learns, as well as honesty of effort, and that continual search for improvement, which is at the base of all progress.

Further, there is the great advantage that he lives in the country and is no longer exposed to the temptations of the great centres. He follows a normal existence with his wife and family instead of living a sort of barrack-room life in a native location in the towns. Yet, of course, there is another side to the question, and this is the possibility of raising up competition to the white man in the labour of the black. If it can be shown that the black man, after a little instruction, is capable of producing a certain class of article better and at a cheaper rate than the supposedly skilled white man, then the latter's superiority falls to the ground.

Like other parts of South Africa, Rhodesia is full of such problems. Indeed, everywhere one goes one is face to face with this insolvable question: "What is to be the future of the native races?" Here in Rhodesia there are the Mashonas and the Matabele—to take the two great divisions of the native peoples. In the early days, before an effective white occupation, the Matabele were the masters and the Mashonas the servants and, to-day, the superior race, far stronger and more warlike and self-assertive than the other, speaks only in terms of contempt of its feeble and long-suffering neighbours. The Matabele were the tribe inhabiting the district round Bulawayo. They were noted, then as now, for their cattle, whereas farther up-country, in the region of Salisbury, agriculture was practised by the aborigines. To arrive as I did in the midst of the annual agricultural show at Salisbury, which is attended by the whole countryside, is to receive a remarkable impression of the colony's prosperity. The maize was particularly fine, and would receive, probably, the first prize at Johannesburg—no mean certificate of merit. And the beasts were hardly less remarkable in their sleekness and excellent condition.

There was, also, something extraordinarily English in the appearance of the crowd—so fresh-looking and sporting in its proclivities. Here is the Britisher transported to another sky, where he has to contend with difficulties quite other than those which face him at home. At all events, taxation will trouble him very little, for it must be surely the lowest in the world. He is not harried by the Income Tax gatherer, who in England provides one of the torments of existence. Here under the wide heavens and in the radiant sunshine one need not fear these too, too obvious drawbacks of post-War Britain. But there are other defects and the most formidable of them all is the loneliness of many of these out-stations. Life with one's nearest neighbours fifty or so miles away is apt to pall, even if one prospers, and has the joy of thinking of an eventual release. Unless you are built of rugged stuff, such thoughts will rush unbidden into your head in the early days of your life as settler in Rhodesia; but afterwards, in a time more or less short, will come to you the blessed calm of such existence, far from the crowds and turmoil of great centres. Are you not king of your own little world, and even master, as it would seem, of your own destiny ? And who shall attempt to describe all the sensations which well up in the bosom at the word " freedom "—not the mere freedom that is the birthright of every Britisher, but the freedom of the boundless veld, of those untrammelled spaces which belong to a vast, unpeopled country. They will produce such a state of contentment and inward peace and yet such exhilaration of spirit that life, which would seem impossible and almost void of vital interests, becomes an inspiration and abiding solace. To such the routine of cities, with its crush and sweat, becomes intolerable —something that stamps out individuality and leaves the human victim of it broken and exhausted with its thousand futilities.

The extraordinary fact about Rhodesia is the spell of it. No one ever wants to leave it. Men and women become attached to it as to something from which they cannot break away. It is only to be explained on the hypothesis that the human spirit is naturally adapted to " the blue," and is held captive by the life of cities. Be that as it may, it comes to most of us, some time in our lives, to sigh for the great free spaces of the earth, where the sun shines every day—where one can count on a fine to-morrow, with a quasi-certainty. It rains only at appointed seasons.

Rhodesia has a charm not easily defined, not easily resisted. Yet, in spite of it, the settler may be attacked suddenly by a sense of isolation after he had thought himself immune. Perhaps a week at Bulawayo or Salisbury, after months on his remote farm, stirs some chord that he thought dumb and dead. " No more of this ; I'm fed up," he exclaims. He gathers friends about him (and possibly creditors) whom he acquaints with his plans. Then he packs his belongings, takes his ticket for England and makes his final dispositions. His friends come to see him off.

VICTORIA FALLS. THE RAINBOW

RHODESIAN NATIVES GIVING ROYAL SALUTE

They may shed a tear or two, but in their hearts they know it is a false exit. One of the more outspoken says, with his usual bluntness, " Shan't say good-bye ; you'll be back again within a year ! "

" Back within a year ! What nonsense ! " In the crowded, thrilling streets of London, his mind reverts to that ridiculous prophecy. How could a man be such a fool ? And yet, strange to say, the " fool " is right. Almost before the year is up, the runaway is back again in the land of sunsets.

" And the evening sun descending
Set the clouds on fire with redness,
Burned the broad sky, like a prairie."

The whole, vast heaven is aflame : the sun goes to bed under canopies of gold and crimson.

Politics are Gilbertian—a fact which adds to the gaieties of life, to the sum of Rhodesia's charms. The Administrator under the Chartered System is a species of Poo Bah : Lord High Executioner, Chancellor, and Keeper of the Purse, rolled into one. But unfortunately one office conflicts with the other. There must be times when the right hand refuses to shake the left—times when the beautiful projects of the " Executioner " quarrel with the poverty of the Purse. And there you have the bitter secret of Rhodesia. There is no money in the chest. Indeed, the Cave Commission returns a deficit of four and a half millions. But the effect is the same whether the indebtedness is fourpence or four millions. In champagne Rhodesia we do not allow trifles to upset us : we are just as gay as if the balance were the other way. It is merely a question of arithmetic—except to the Chartered Shareholders. Rhodesian spirits never failed, and they never will. You " pay " with a smile when the cash is wanting. The Responsible Government Party, which seems to loom as large as the sunsets, has never lost its high hopes because of a question of ways and means. It is true that the railway is the Chartered Company's ; that the mines are worked by companies paying tribute to her ; that the land is the Crown's—after deduction made for administration. So the cupboard is bare for Responsibility. There are the natives, but they have no money.

I was in Bulawayo the day when the cables announced the chilling answer of the Secretary of State to the demands of the popular party and, worse than all, hinted that " native interests " would not be furthered by exchanging Chartered rule for a popular one. Sir Charles Coghlan, a lawyer of Irish extraction, and leader of the party, was quite disposed to fight the point. Said he : " They speak of us as if we were living in the jungle ! " His eyes ranged the well-filled shelves of his lawyer's office, out to the great wide street where Rhodes' statue stands, admirable in its virility, in its sense of dominance. " Interests of the natives, indeed ! And would they be better off under the Union, where Lord Milner wants to push us—the Union where the majority is Dutch ? " There was much in what he said ; yet there was much, also, in the notion that Downing Street would want guarantees before it handed over the black man to new patrons. Of the party that desires power is Mrs. Tawse Jollie, a member of the Legislative Council, and the first woman M.P. in Britain Overseas. Though I did not see her—for her farm lies off the railway, a fortnight's journey from Salisbury—I knew from her published views what she thinks of company rule. Of course it is an anachronism and yet, " que voulez-vous ? " A community of forty thousand souls, scattered over a great region, big as France and Germany together, is no taxable proposition. And everyone must know it. There is something Pickwickian, too, in the fact that the Company is anxious to go and the Popular

Party to take up office, and neither can effect his purpose. It is not love that keeps the Company rooted to the soil as governors; it is not the contrary that prevents the Responsibles from entering upon their task: it is just money.

Rhodes believed that the minerals would pay the first cost of running the country, though he saw that permanent prosperity must depend on stock-raising and agriculture. He was right in the latter supposition—less right in the former. The Globe and Phœnix mine had begun to pay again when I was in the country. It must have yielded handsome dividends in the past; otherwise, gold is far less promising than the baser metals: asbestos, chrome-iron, copper, etc.

But there is more gold in the Mazoe Valley than in most "formations"—gold in the oranges on a vast estate owned and irrigated from a large dam by the B.S.A. The Company has great ranches in other parts, notably a little west of Victoria, where lions are met with, from time to time, devouring the cattle. I heard of five being caught, in little more than a day, by trap and poison, the contaminated meat being placed behind a "boma" or palisade—a poor way to slay the king of beasts. But here he is vermin, as in other parts, and no licence is required to shoot him. Even sedentary-looking men carry about rifles as others toothpicks, and relate exploits which I trust are true—in any case they are amusing. The Administrator, Sir Drummond Chaplin, manages to loop the financial loop on next to nothing a year, which is a great (if unpopular) feat. He himself is not unpopular, though he does not wear, I judge, his heart upon his sleeve. But he is efficient, like most men outwardly cool, and Germiston, the mining centre, sent him to Parliament though he was a big "boss" in the Rhodes group. When I asked a Rand official why this was—because the capitalist is not always loved on the mines, he replied : " Chaplin is such a gentleman, and the Rand likes that." The Administrator, indeed, looks the part of a modern autocrat ; but is none the less charming for his unsmiling eyes.

If gold is in small veins and somewhat patchy, there is coal at Wankie near the Falls, a place so warm that a local man, who descended to Hades immediately sent for his overcoat and a box of matches—at least, that is the story.

The future seems to lie in amalgamation with the Union. The idea gains adherents, though they are less vocal than the others. The advantages of linking up with South Africa are considerable. Smuts would be strengthened by the addition of, say, a dozen seats which would counter-balance the Nationalist advantage from the incorporation of South-West Africa. Hertzogians and Germans are on common ground in desiring to end the British connection. In its new status Rhodesia would be a province of the Union, and Mrs. Tawse Jollie would sit, presumedly, in the Cape Parliament, again the first of her sex to occupy such a situation in South Africa. But the stumbling-block is always finance. Who is to indemnify the Company for its " administrative " deficits ? If the Union were to take over the country it would mean a pretty expense. There is a proposal that the white-settled portions of Northern Rhodesia, the administration of which entails a loss of £150,000 a year on the B.S.A., should join their brethren of the Southern portion. This seems an excellent way. The population involved is about 3000.

Economically, Rhodesia should develop as a cattle country, exporting through Beira to Europe and by Cape railways to the South. Her misfortune is in having no port, and in being land-locked by the Portuguese. The Charter does not expire in 1924 by the revision of the Company's administrative powers ; that is permanent as regards its trading rights. And once the divorce is pronounced the "better half" of commerce should proceed on sound commercial lines. Perhaps it might even experience the sensation of paying dividends.

Since I wrote the above lines, the Buxton Committee has reported in favour of Responsibility—a solution which is certainly gratifying to local sentiment, whatever the other objections to it.

## XV

# THE GARDEN CITY AND SOME OTHERS

DURBAN is an Eden without the Serpent. Adam is not the Old Adam, but an exemplary young man. Eve is charming, as is her wont—extremely fair to look upon, generally clothed in white, as if a " dhobie " were always on hand, and the laundry bill did not matter. Those are the white garments of her blameless life. Durban, compared with Johannesburg, is the white of the lily with the crimson of the peony. And the Gold City rather rejoices in its wickedness, its tumultuous past, when there was a little shooting on Saturdays and on other days as well. As to Kimberley, her youth will not bear examination with its mad poker parties and ladies flaunting disrespectability. Durban is virtuous and yet not self-righteous. In a vigorous middle age, the Garden City is British to the backbone. Before I arrived there, people said: " You will find two things in the town: Wesleyans and mixed bathing." I found the Wesleyans, but no mixed bathing. In spite of being British, Durban does not rule the waves. Britannia's trident was broken by the Indian Ocean. And the Ocean does what it likes now. For you will have gathered, perhaps, that Durban is by the sea—a pearl, indeed, of the Indian Ocean.

A bathing enclosure was the pride of the town, and netted to keep out the sharks. But it could not frighten the ocean, and boisterous seas made mince-meat of the enclosure. That is why there was no bathing in 1920, when I was there, and visitors from the North sat on chairs along the sea front and wondered what to do. For mixed bathing was the staple industry of the shore—that and whaling. (But I could urge olfactory objections to the whales, when they leave their native element.) On the other hand, there was a little gambling at booths along the beach, serving, perhaps, to remind some Durban citizens of their lusty youth when they searched for fortunes on the Rand or, perchance, dived for it, in a diver's suit, in rivers where the diamond is supposed to lurk. But they are quite respectable to-day and never miss the plate in church.

I have said that Durban is British, which is tantamount to Scotch—but "Scotch" diluted with the Indian Ocean. That makes all the difference in the manners of the place. Thus, whilst church bells tinkle, everybody does not heed the summons. I saw some godless tennis out in the open on the Sabbath day, for everyone to see. Then I knew I must be far indeed from the "Land o' Cakes." Again, the tramcars run with unabated zeal at the hours of prayer, and the clanging metal outside breaks the thread of the discourse. But there is no relief from the noise, for church doors and windows must remain open in this sun-smitten clime. In spite of a thermometer which never stands very high, Durban is a hot place. But it is the nature of the heat that matters. Being low-lying by the sea, it has a dampness in the air, which is very trying. Fortunately, I was there in winter when the climate is superb; but, even so, some days of limpness occurred. Britons of the third generation seem not to be as strong as those who have just come out. The damp heat tries especially children who do not get away to the high ground at least three months in the year. They begin to wear the tell-tale pallor of whites who suffer from too much sun. But, as compensation, there is a splendid Hinterland. It is high and bracing and ascends, eventually, to 5000 feet or more. Midway up, the conditions are ideal. What is called the Mist Belt, twenty miles from Durban, is a region renowned for flowers and children that look like them. In this Belt grows the wattle to perfection.

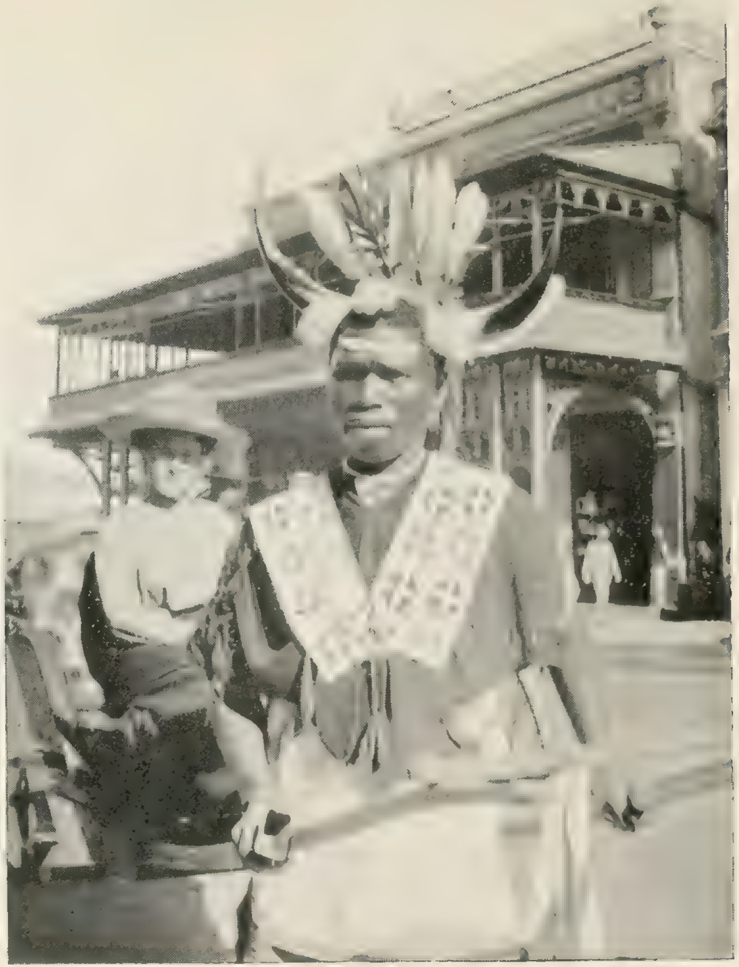
Though adolescence suffers from too long a stay on low ground, yet the sporting spirit is strong. Durban is renowned for all manly games. She plays them with the zeal inherent in the race. I saw great crowds on the grounds here at football matches. But the players return to their homes in rickshas as if " Natal fever " was a real bar to prolonged energy and not a mere name for laziness. However that may be, slackness in politics is evident enough in letting in Labour when General Smuts stood at the door asking for support in his great struggle with Separation. . . . But this sight, each Saturday, of young men and women armed with clubs and sporting implements is grateful to our eyes.

Blood tells. This Liverpool of Africa is peopled with our own race. I like to think that that is why there is no ugly scandal here—only the atmosphere of wholesome boys and girls. Instead of the hoarse whisper of suggestion, there is the pleasant swish of racquets. It is the sign of communal health. Health and wealth go together in this wholly happy town. Durban, by the same token, is the richest spot south of the Line. Her population pays per capita more in income tax than even the Gold City. Prosperity ! thy name is Durban. Most of the money is made by way of trade and speculation—little in mining or industry on the large scale. But Durban for situation is unrivalled. Her potentialities are prodigious. She looks towards India, by the grace of Providence, and finds a vast outlet there. Bombay and Durban are the two poles of an expanding traffic. The commercial life of Africa, according to the wise, will gravitate along Eastern coasts as it frees itself more and more from Europe and towards this vast population of India and the Farther East. And India, we must remember, is revolutionized by modern commerce, and clamours for goods and more goods in exchange for her own. Consider the propinquity of this British port not merely to Bombay, but to Colombo, where trade increases, and to Calcutta, rightly said to be the door of entrance to one hundred and sixty millions. And India, of course, has the densest population on the globe. It numbers, probably, three hundred and thirty millions. And think, also, of China, Java, and Japan—perhaps a thousand million human beings awakening to new desires and strong with accruing strength. For they have not been broken by the War ; their finances have not been beggared or their young men sacrificed. On the contrary they have profited (at least in world consequence) by our weakness in man-power and in powers of the purse. The moral is obvious, I think, and Durban should profit by it. How can she fail to achieve wealth and to expand beyond her present limits with these factors in her favour. Moreover, she is but three weeks from Australia.

When the War was on, and the Mediterranean unsafe for ships, troops came from India by way of Durban and the Cape, tasting, *en route*, Durban's far-famed hospitality. And they have not ceased to speak of it : of the free tram rides round the beautiful town, so well planted with trees, which are gorgeous at certain seasons with flamboyant blossoms—a town so verdant, so miraculously clean and sweet-smelling, so civicly efficient, which is the mark of British rule. And it is truly British, to pretend not to know how rich one is, for Crœsus might be taken for his clerk. That is the Durban way. And this modesty is reflected everywhere. Yet no similar town in England shows such " flag day " results. One Saturday alone £800 was taken in the streets. The West Street Hut, which entertained a million and a quarter soldiers " passing through," never wanted for a penny. The money always came in the nick of time to the founder and president, Mrs. George Payne, to whom has been given the title of "Mother of the Soldiers." Motor-cars reflect the solidity of the town. I doubt if, anywhere, exists a higher percentage of car owners, except it be the United States. At the July Handicap, Durban's Derby, the cars amount to hundreds.

Sixty odd years ago, the town was a tiny settlement on the sands. Its citizens rode on horses to transact their business, for feet sank ankle-deep in the powdery roadways. And, solemnly, these early settlers ploughed their way up the Berea—a rampart some hundreds of feet high at the back of the town—then a tangled mass of bush, in which monkeys screamed and deadly black mambas watched. Now the monkeys have departed, and the snakes with them. The tragedy of Isandhlwana shocked and terrified the town. A thousand British soldiers were cut up by the Zulus, and there was nothing between Durban and savagery let loose, but the heroism of Rorke's Drift. Hastily the town went into laager, formed at the Point, looking across the sea whence help seems always to come to distressed Britons. And it came this time, when hope was dead. Isandhlwana was avenged. The sand-bagged street-corners and roof-copings and the loop-holed shutters of shops ceased to be strategic points. Peace reigned ; but not for long. Majuba Hill, on the day when there was an eclipse of the sun, seemed to be, also, an eclipse of British arms and even of honour when Gladstone yielded to the victors. After the tremors and alarms of those days, the sword was hung again in the hall until wrenched from its place once more for a new encounter with the Boers. Durban's heroic spirit, and that intense loyalty which is all the stronger for being unrevealed, showed itself in splendid service in the field. When the enemy advanced beyond the Tugela, the town was again exposed. About this

AGAPANTHUS LILY
MRS. GEORGE PAYNE IN HER DURBAN GARDEN



RICKSHA BOY
DURBAN

time Escombe's Horse was formed. Strong and workmanlike looked the troopers in corduroys, to which the populace gave a pungent name. Rather like a stage army they went round and round to inspire the enemy with a notion of their numbers. Whether Brother Boer was impressed or not I do not know, but the corduroy was never drenched with gore and most of its wearers died in their beds. When the real peril was ended, the British authorities proceeded to "protect" the town. "How characteristic!" declared the scoffers. Of course, in the greater struggle of yesterday, Durban did her duty, as you may see, if you penetrate merchants' offices and read the names of men inscribed on panels, oak-leaved and garlanded memorially. One such tribute to the brave is the tower of a church serving as honour scroll to such as fought and died.

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The impression left on me by Kimberley was rather melancholy. The business of the diamond mines was of a slender sort, as if the "slump" were already seen—a slump that has closed down the mines everywhere. The monopoly of a great corporation is a stifling possession. The town seems to feel the loss of freedom—as if it were beyond the price of diamonds. De Beers manages the whole life of the diamond fields. The effect of so much coddling is not good for the public, which complains (into any ear that listens) that it has no word to say—or, at least, is overruled in its own affairs. The diamond industry is dominant; it has made Kimberley what it is—and well, it must take the consequences. The days are gone when illicit diamond buying was the great and dangerous excitement on the fields. Now no one dares to practise it any more. There is no chance, indeed, of its success, for vigilance is linked with stern powers in the matter. The precautions are extraordinary, as you may see if you wander awhile over the De Beers' estate and note the close watch kept upon the natives in the compounds, where they are lodged and fed and even spiritually doctored (as well as their hospital treatment) on the most approved scale. The atmosphere, both moral and physical, reminds me of Monte Carlo. You have the same suspicions in the official eye. A visit to the mines was rather discountenanced by authority, which said that there was little to see now that work was being suspended. I got, therefore, only a superficial view of a dark interior deep in the bowels of the earth, where lights glimmered. It did not promise a pleasant promenade, and I was not sorry when it stopped. My guide enlivened the gloom by speaking of an adventurous lady who penetrated to this Stygian world and meeting, in a narrow passage, a squad of returning mine " boys," continued *tout de même* over the prostrate bodies of black humanity, which, lying down, made a path for beauty, at the instigation of the native ganger. Since she walked with high-heeled shoes, the experience was pointed enough, doubtless, for the black " carpet."

Convict labour works in the purlieus of the Pulveriser as the machine is called which cracks the hard blue ground in which diamonds are found. This system, as I have found, is much in vogue in South Africa : to employ wrongdoers to increase the national wealth. These convicts are marched to and from their work each day and the monetary worth of their labours is transmitted to the Government in relief of taxes. After the stamping processes are finished, the resulting diamonds and diamondiferous ground are passed over vibrating trays and then descend a series of broad steps, in which they are once more oscillated and selected by these processes. Down these steps come the precious crystals, adhering, on the way, to the grease with which the tiny platforms are anointed. The noise of the Pulsator, as this machine is called, with its curious jigging dance is deafening—and some go deaf. I was particularly interested in seeing canisters filled with the diamonds that represent a single day's work. They were valued at £30,000, and looked innocent enough—washed and purified and chastened by their hard discipline. I wonder if Dame Fashion realizes the trouble taken to give her her pretty wares. The Secretary of the Company, Mr. Steward, presides over the ceremonies which attend the departure of the stones to the Company's headquarters. Two men mounted on stout cobs and armed to the teeth are the escort. Mr. Steward rides in a Cape cart drawn by two horses, and his bodyguard trots, with portentous gravity, on either side. "Why not an automobile?" I asked the Secretary, after I had experienced the sensation of handling these mysterious little stones. "Oh," he replied, "we've never done it like that. Each day for thirty years I have taken the diamonds to the office and no incident has occurred."

With that we must say "good-bye" to diamonds. Personally, I feel there is something depressing in an industry which is dependent on a passing whim of luxury.

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At Bloemfontein I get a new sensation. Here the atmosphere is exhilarating—it is one of the windiest places in the world, exposed to all the breeze that blows across the endless plains. It is the centre of the farming industry, and supports the *Farmer's Weekly*, an excellent organ of large circulation. The Free State capital is at once the geographical and political centre of the Union. Had it not been for the superior claims of Pretoria, and the tradition associated with Cape Town, Bloemfontein would have had the Government buildings, which I describe elsewhere. It is now the seat of the Supreme Court, which delivers judgments that go, sometimes, to the Privy Council of the Empire. The town wears a dignified and judicial air. It is full of lawyers as if Dutchmen were litigious fellows, which they are; but I think a truer reason is that lawyers arrange loans on mortgage and the farmer, here as elsewhere, is constantly in need of temporary advances. To my mind, Bloemfontein is distinguished mainly for the monument that exists outside the town. It is a memorial to the death roll of the women and children in the Concentration Camps, and formidable the total is. In this imperishable figure of the mother with the stricken child upon her knees, the sculptor, Adrian van Vouw, seems to have symbolized the grief of all the mothers in the world, who lose their cherished children.

It is melancholy that this memory, so bitter to the Boers, should be perpetuated by a monument so poignant in its expression of unforgiving grief. Happily, Bloemfontein is a centre, also, for the reconciliatory spirit. Whilst I was in South Africa, two important meetings of political parties were held. The object was to blend and unify. So, it is constructive in its influence to-day. Architecturally, it has a *cachet*—not like the ugliness of some northern towns. These buildings have a homely grace suggestive of roominess and comfort. And here, in this red palace, reigned President Brand, a real father of his people, whose rule was punctuated with familiarity and good sense. Indeed, the Free State was a model for its laws and the way they were obeyed. Its undoing came from its junction with the Transvaal.

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Finally, we have 'Maritzburg, called sometimes The Sleepy Hollow, for its situation is in a valley, very stifling on hot days. It has the air, somehow, of somnolence and departed glory. It seems to brood over its past as if mourning for the days that are no more when it was a centre of Government, and the British garrison rattled a joyous sabre and danced with all the belles. Though Botha gave it some consideration under the Union's scheme, it cannot resist the force of Fate and is now sleepily content with a reputation as a centre of education. " Sic transit gloria mundi."

## XVI

# THE INDIAN AND HIS CRITICS

THE Indian question has become peculiarly acute in Natal, and seems to possess to an extraordinary degree the gift of raising the temperature of the disputants. It is a question concerning the continued residence of the Asiatic in white South Africa. Shall he be induced to depart by means of mingled bribery and compulsion; shall he be passively "encouraged" to remain? The present restlessness of India is not unconnected with the treatment of the coolie in the Union. Perhaps, because Durban fronts India, feeling is peculiarly intense on the subject there. And, of course, Natal is directly concerned and directly responsible, for she introduced the coolie to plant, tend and harvest her cane and, later, to cultivate her tea. In both cases, local labour failed in quality and quantity, and the Indian saved the situation. Some months' residence at Durban was a useful preliminary to a study of this question, for here are the head-waters of the controversy, which has raged over the country. The Indian possesses the unfortunate distinction of being unpopular. His very virtues are cause of offence. The evidence taken during my residence in South Africa for the purposes of the Asiatic Committee's Report, showed that only too conclusively. And the unfortunate thing is that there are 150,000 Indians in Natal—a number exceeding that of the white population. Neither his qualities nor his defects commend the brown-faced stranger to the South African. The first are in the direction of economy; I will deal with the second a little later. The Indian possesses an extraordinary capacity for saving. He will live " on the smell of an oil-rag," the Colonials say. That is his crime. His cheapness and the incredible smallness of his appetite were his crowning virtues sixty years ago—but that was when he was wanted for the sugar plantations. Then he was introduced as an indentured labourer at 10s. per month, with food, rising to 15s. at the beginning of the fifth year. Now, this capacity to live on nothing is thrown up against him, for no European can really compete with him. That has made the great outcry, the echoes of which reverberate through the Press. Years ago the promising young man from the large merchant firms in South Africa looked forward to starting a little business in the back country. Each little " dorp " had its store owned and run by a white man. Everything was sold there: " kaffir truck "—that is to say, the beads, blankets, pots and pans, and the other simple articles required by the raw native—and the jam, biscuits, pickles, ham and tenpenny nails required by civilization. Now, the white man is no longer there. His place is taken by the Indian. Even the Jew has had to give way to him, and that explains, perhaps, the dead set that has been made against him. It is a propaganda aided and abetted, perhaps even initiated, by the Semite. If the white man lingers on in some districts it is because he is too nervous (of his creditors) to leave. It is rarely because he is making money.

If you ask for an explanation, the last of the white traders will tell you: " Oh, that coolie (he is always a " coolie " when he is not spoken of as " Sammy "—this with a certain accent of toleration) lives on nothing and saves every farthing. He ' dosses ' beneath the counter of his shop in a box of shavings or places his sleeping mat on bags of flour and potatoes. He has no home-life, no recreation, no standard of comfort—no anything except an unending round of trying to make money. A little rice and rags of clothes content him. You can imagine how the British working man or small trader regards him—he who has struggled hard these many years to 'emancipate' himself, to give his life a little dignity. It is really a conflict in the ideals of East and West." The Indian marries early and hies him to a house which may be built of anything. If he is a town labourer or engaged in the smaller sort of fruit and flower culture, he will inhabit a terrible-looking shanty made of flattened petrol tins. So unsightly a dwelling excites the strong resentment of the white man. It is generally insanitary : the kaffir's hut is a model of order and cleanliness compared with this eyesore of a dwelling-place. To add to the horror of it, its site is certain to be the prettiest in the country-side—a ridge overlooking wide, pleasant valleys. Thus is Durban, to its very gates, polluted and defiled by these excrescences. They are actually outside the city boundaries, and within the jurisdiction of the Provincial Council, which apparently cares nothing for the amenities. It has enacted no building laws, and is seemingly indifferent to this desecration of the scene. That these miserable residences are visible from the main roads leading from Durban into the interior makes matters worse.

The Indian admits readily enough that his dwellings are not ideal, that the sanitary arrangements are nil, that the conditions are quite unfavourable to the bringing up of his family. "But," he says, "this is as much as I can do on the money I receive. How can a man live in a *real* house at the present price of commodities, and at present rentals, when he earns but £6 a month ! We Indians live as well as the white man—at the same wage." This is some part of the truth, but not all of it. To express the problem in all its terms, one must say that while the Indian does not earn as much as the white man, generally speaking, for the same class of work, and therefore less must be expected of him in the matter of appearances and house accommodation, yet he is more uncleanly than the native. His womenfolk, however intelligent and industrious, present a soiled and unkempt appearance—even though arrayed in finery—in comparison with the lower classes of the white population and even of the native women. The Indian is constantly accused of being a danger to the health of the community, and his homes are described as fever-spots, as breeding-grounds for epidemics. There is some justification for this; and, indeed, the lower class Indian in Natal does not set an example of that virtue which approaches godliness. Yet one feels that his chief delinquency is that he competes not too fairly but too successfully with the white man. He lives and flourishes where the white man starves. That is the core of the complaint. Thus, gradually, all the retail trade in the small centres in Natal is passing into the hands of the Indian. I take the Garden Colony as the crowning instance because here the Indian is most numerous. Elsewhere his numbers are insignificant in the general population.

The Indian has not only the faculty for prospering where the white man fails, but of building up important businesses. He attracts custom by methods perfected by himself. He is intelligent and laborious, and takes infinite pains. Again, the favour by which he is regarded by white financiers is one of the chief causes of jealousy. The big merchants of Durban, Cape Town and Johannesburg give credit to the Indian where, often, they refuse it to the struggling white man. I heard this complaint frequently in South Africa that the Indian is preferred to the Briton and wondered why it was so—until I got to know some of the rejected ones. Then I was no longer surprised that people so irresolute and indifferent should be beaten by the Indian whose mentality shines from his eyes and seems to be reflected in his glossy black hair. The white trader in these tiny South African towns is certainly not the *crême de la crême* of the commercial world. And he would, I suspect, fail to make a good living anywhere. Certainly he is hopelessly beaten in the game in centres where the chief trade is with a primitive black people. The Indian, as I have said, takes infinite pains. No detail is too small for him, no profit too infinitesimal. He makes a study of his customers, and mixes psychology with business. He reads the childish and yet crafty soul in front of him — the *naïveté* with shrewdness which lies beneath the bland exterior. He produces a canister of sweets. No native can resist that. The ice is broken. Business relations are established. The customer is never hurried. Even after he has made his purchase of a second-hand suit of surpassing splendour, or a pronged fork for his " mealie " patch, he is invited to linger, to look again on the objects in the shop. The Indian is never " superior," nor does he wear a worried air, and the kaffir, enjoying thoroughly the attention shown and the air of consequence with which it seems to invest him, flashes a smile with his white teeth as he leaves the store—to bring back Mrs. Kaffir a little later. She will buy unheard of glories if she can induce the storekeeper to give her credit—and he is generally most obliging. Mohammed Ali has made a new customer.

The methods that succeed with the native seem to be even more effective with white people. A cursory examination of the shops in a small town in Natal will convince you of the popularity of the Indian—with his customers (it ends there). Though the Dutch are hostile to the race and keep it out as far as they can from their old-time republics, yet their womenkind are by no means immune from the temptations of the Indian silks and other fineries exhibited in the " Bombay " bazaars.

I have known cases where the husband expresses the strictest views, in public, on the desirability of excluding the alien, whilst his wife does all her shopping with him either in the store or from the baskets brought to her house. She will tell you that the Indian's goods are better and cheaper, and that he is more obliging than the British or Dutch tradesman. She hints that he is easy in the matter of payments.

Durban shows a remarkable development in the Indian's commercial position. His progress has been phenomenal since the war, and as the great South African port is the main outlet and inlet of trade with Bombay, it is here that we see the greatest signs of his prosperity. Dark-skinned merchants riding in superb motor-cars driven by white chauffeurs are no uncommon sight to the resentful amazement of the older white residents. Recently, Indians have inhabited the Berea, the most fashionable part of Durban overlooking the town and sparkling bay. Such invasion caused something of a panic amongst the exclusive residents of this preserve. There was dejected talk of property depreciation, and of a lowering of morals caused by the propinquity—actual or assumed—of a harem! The Indian business area in Durban is making emphatic headway. Indian stores are larger and finer each year and more replete with high-priced and fashionable goods intended for white consumption, and not merely for the negro. Indian tailors are very good and secure a large trade. During the reign of high prices in clothes in Durban in 1920, Indians (or "Arabs," as they are oddly called, though in reality they are Bombay merchants) were the unconscious or, at least, involuntary instruments of the profiteer. A friend who ordered for 18 guineas a suit in one of the West Street emporiums (West Street being the Regent Street of Durban), discovered that it was being made by "Arabs" in a back street. Their price for the completed costume was less than half that of the West Street firm. Equally menacing to white supremacy is the incursion made by the Bombay trader into the business centre of Durban. He has begun to occupy the best sites. He neighbours the most reputable and firmly established shops. These are the reasons why he is reaping a harvest of hate. But the charges against him may be limited to two : (1) That he does not rise fast enough in the scale of civilization as represented by good houses and clothing (2) That he rises too fast in the scale of competitive commerce.

Another aspect of this controversy is the attitude of the native towards the Indian. It is probably true that the Indian, as a whole, is not affectionately regarded by the negro, but could the white man honestly claim that he has won the black heart ? If he did, he would be suffering strangely from illusions. The native is not enamoured of any of the strangers within his gates. He regards them as interlopers who have robbed him of his land and curtailed his liberty. I do not say that he is right, for under native chiefs and subject to the predatory attacks of warring tribes, his lot was anything but a happy one ; yet, in his short view, all his troubles date from the coming of the white man. He has forgotten, conveniently, his former estate. Be that as it may, he does not look kindly on the Indian, for he regards him, oddly enough, as the favourite of Great Britain. He says that everywhere throughout the Union he is given privileges that are denied the black man. The Indian can trade where he pleases ; the native is mostly debarred outside his own areas. The Indian acquires land, even (as in the Transvaal and outside the Union) where the law requires a little manœuvring to get round it ; the kaffir cannot own land outside the native reservations. The Indian can procure drink, whereas it is a penal offence to serve alcohol to the black man. Sammy is nominally subject to the curfew, but manages more successfully than the aboriginal to escape it—possibly by writing out his own passes, which he offers to an illiterate native constable. "If the Indian does not like his life here, he can return to India; but we have nowhere else to go; we must submit to the laws." Thus spoke a native chieftain to me in Durban, complaining that the newcomer was preferred to the original inhabitant.

I have by no means exhausted the tale of those who complain, generally on moral grounds, of the Indian. But the objection is a little weakened by the fact that he who makes it is affected in his material interests by Indian competition. The Asiatic is said to be grasping, dishonest and extremely tricky. Sometimes late at night in towns in Natal you will find a native policeman, whose bare polished legs twinkle in the light of the street lamps, dragging along a Sammy to jail. His shiny face and well-oiled limbs, seem to glow with satisfaction at the task. He is possibly paying off old scores, and avenging past incidents between native and Indian. For it is frequently alleged that the Indian trader overreaches the native, giving him short change or charging exorbitant rates of interest for any loan. There is no smoke without fire, and the superior intelligence of the one makes possible, at least, such an exercise of his wits. Yet it is difficult to reconcile this view with the fact that the Asiatic is rapidly getting all the retail trade with natives outside the large centres, and driving out the Jew who cannot live beside him. The Jew always has been accused of cheating the native. It is curious, therefore, that the Indian succeeds because he "goes one better" than the Jew. How, then, does he grow in grace daily with the native as witness his visibly expanding business? And, again, if the Indian is unreliable, how does he get credit more easily than a European? Owners of property on their part seem to sell to him in preference to a white purchaser.

"Oh," says the critic, "the Indian gets an unfair advantage by offering a premium. He will pay anything to get into an exclusive white district." Meanwhile, the fact remains that he becomes more prosperous every year and makes greater inroads into "white" business.

The European trader is ready with another objection. He tells you that his Asiatic confrère does not pay the same rate of wages as himself. This is true enough, but there is an explanation for it which I discovered in making enquiries amongst Indian merchants. In their emporiums are few old hands, who have to be paid, perhaps £500 to £700 or more per annum, for their long experience. The assistants are young and their salaries are relatively low. The Indian is too restless and mobile a creature to remain long in a subordinate capacity. He remains just long enough to learn the secrets of the business and then sets up for himself, in the smallest way imaginable, on capital borrowed from the white wholesale houses. Small as it is, the business is his; that is its deep attraction for him, and he will work his hardest and submit to great sacrifices to keep it alive. The Englishman, on the other hand, must begin, as he wishes to continue, on a certain standard. He must wait, therefore, until he has money enough to reach that point. Thus ten or twenty years may find him still waiting. His precious youth has slipped away. The Indian, however, has acted on his impulse, and stands to the consequences.

Indians of the wealthy class complain of social rather than of political disabilities. A leading Durban merchant told me recently that he desired to see some boxing bouts at the Town Hall. He put down several sovereigns for himself and friends—at a sovereign a seat. "Sorry," said the clerk behind the pay-desk, "Europeans only in those seats. You can have standing room"—this to a man rich enough to buy up the hall if he had chosen!

Before I left Durban, this state of things was partially remedied. For the first time in sporting history a block of seats was reserved for Indians at the England *v.* South Africa Rugby match. The growing interest of Indians in sport is a delightful thing. It is apparent from the number of cricket and football teams that exist which play competitions amongst themselves. In other parts of Africa, in Zanzibar and Mombasa and in Kenya Colony proper (British East Africa) Indians meet the whites at play, but I did not see signs of that in Natal. But at least here the sporting spirit is useful in breaking down caste, which is still prevalent in this free air. Indeed, the irony of the situation is that many of those who loudly claim equality with whites are denied equality by their own countrymen. The more advanced and wealthy Indians complain because they are obliged to associate in railway carriages and on other occasions with uncleanly compatriots of the lowest " sweeper " class. They are all " Indians " in the official mind; there is no differentiation made. As my chapters on the negro show, I have met exactly the same complaint amongst the educated blacks, who remark bitterly that they are bracketed with raw, blanket natives in any regulations framed for native people. There is no recognition of the fact that a certain section of the black community has risen far above the common standard. The black races are moving through their élite as all races must move. In the same way the wealthy Indian complains that though he pays for first-class accommodation with the seclusion it connotes, he does not always get it, for Indians and natives of every degree are thrust in upon him if there is a shortage of seats. He must abstain from the theatre altogether or occupy inferior seats. He contends, not unnaturally, that adequate arrangements should be made to accommodate him at entertainments and elsewhere. But I do not find he has any desire to push himself into European society—to go where he is not wanted. If he objects to the Ghetto, it is as a principle. He does not want assimilation in the sense of mixed marriages or of mingling with Europeans on all occasions. This may come later, but it is not his present desire.

Then there is the question of the Indian's capacity. Can he rise to the white standard of efficiency and intellectuality ? I think there is no doubt about it. Indian children in Natal and other parts of the country are keenly set upon their work and show sharpness and intelligence. A Durban friend, who advertised for a clerk for architectural work, received the best expressed letter from an Indian. Indians are entering business houses, banks, law offices and, indeed, everywhere where the colour bar is not too rigidly applied. Unfortunately, some of the coolie class imitate the white man in drinking. Many so-called hotels up-country are camouflaged drinking dens for the Asiatic. His industry, none the less, is his strongest virtue. He has made the waste ground on the outskirts of municipal areas to blossom as the rose. He has the art of raising bananas, vegetables and flowers on the most unlikely swamps. " Petite culture " is almost entirely in his hands, thanks to his undefeatable industry and patience. Sammy's baskets balanced on the end of a bamboo pole, like the nests of the weaver bird, go bobbing along the streets and lanes of every township in Natal. I was surprised to see Ladysmith, of heroic memory, converted into an Indian settlement, as far as the retail trade is concerned.

The Natal Indians I have met do not claim the vote. They say their countrymen are not yet ready for it, but they were admitted Moderates. At the same time, these men declare that great progress and prosperity would come to South Africa, agriculturally, if thousands of ryots were imported. South Africa, they say, could support a large Indian population, which would mean immense reserves of food—instead of the present boundless and profitless wastes—for the starving millions of the world.

Finally, on the question of repatriation, the answer is that British subjects cannot legally be expelled from British territory, and the system breaks down at its weakest point when we find the lowest class of labourer being returned to his mother country at the public expense, whilst the trader remains to trouble again the slumbers of his white rival. And he who has departed homeward is, precisely, the man most needed for the development of the sub-continent. So I fear there is no solution of the Indian difficulty in South Africa except in maintaining the ordinance against their further entrance. It is obvious that to attempt to repatriate the prosperous merchants and up-country traders, who are real thorns in the flesh of white retail commerce, would be a very expensive process. I observe, also, that whilst the Inquiry Commission, set up, denounces the Asiatic "menace" as a myth, it maintains restrictions and even proposes to add to them—which is not quite the way of wisdom or even of expediency.

## XVII

# FARMING IN THE UNION

ALL over the Union the word of the farmer is law. He is the king of South Africa. His interests are studied in every detail. To him the Parliamentary world does homage because he is the most powerful class in the State. He pays no taxes—at least there is not a farthing of taxation on the land. He sees to it that the townsman pays all the demands of the Fisc. Nor is he amenable to the Profiteering Act. One of the planks of the Labour Party is the proper taxation of the farmer, but generally it says very little about it, as if it feared the opposition that would be created. Nothing could be more unpopular for the reason that everybody is more or less connected with agriculture. And the towns, which bear the financial burden of the administration, are generally in a state of high prosperity and pay the charges without much grumbling about them. It is a farmers' Government, and this explains the extraordinary predominance of the landed interest in politics in South Africa. Whatever the fight between Republicans and Constitutionalists, there is, at bottom, this bond of union—that each is deeply interested in the land and intent upon keeping down expenditure except that which advances the farmers' interest. North, South, East and West the farmer rules. People talk stock and " mealies " and the price of farm produce as the one vital topic of the country. Farming is, indeed, the paramount interest. Formerly, as General Smuts said, in the course of a speech on the

Rand, the gold mines were the mainstay of South Africa; now, though a considerable factor, they are of diminishing importance, whilst agriculture is growing.

It is interesting to compare the different kinds of agriculture suited to the varying soil and climate of the sub-continent. Thus, in the old-settled Cape Province, where South Africa had its birth, the main preoccupations of the farmer are grain and fruit-growing. The wine farms represent the most important industry. The beautiful estates, which produce Cape wines and brandy, are situated chiefly in the Western Province in the neighbourhood of Cape Town. These represent the earliest industry, starting from the days of the Dutch East India Company. The first settlers were the servants of the Company; but the latter stipulated that its ex-servants should not engage in any trading deterimental to its own interests. And in the cultivation of these fine estates the farmers had the help of slave labour, both of natives imported from East and West Africa, and Malays, who were often expert artisans and helped as carpenters, smiths and masons, to construct the beautiful dwellings, in the Dutch style, which are a joy to the eye in the Western Province, and speak so eloquently of the culture and taste of these Dutch officials who carried with them, overseas, refinement of manners and an elegant mode of life.

Under slave-labour the wine farms prospered, and the Cape became famous for its fruits. The soil in this favoured region is so fertile that only a modicum of cultivation is required; but, even so, science could add, considerably, to the productivity. That the slaves played a considerable part in the development of this smiling region with its high fertility, beautiful scenery, and abundant sunshine, is seen in the various records extant and in the fact that the slave-bell, calling the hands to and from work, still remains, as also the slave quarters, generally placed in the basement of the house and approached by a small, low door. Here the slaves were herded each night. Their condition, generally, was not as bad as that of many bondsmen in the West Indies, for they were well taken care of on the whole, and regarded as valuable property.

Grain grows splendidly in various parts of Cape Province, as in the Free State. But, speaking generally, South Africa is not a wheat-growing country. Both soil and climate are better suited to the growing of maize. This is particularly true of Natal, where the rains fall in summer, whereas at the Cape the wet season is in winter. In the Swellendam district of Cape Province are many broad wheat fields, and the farmers in the neighbourhood enjoy a large prosperity. Generally, the soil is too dry for the cultivation of wheat which, in Rhodesia, for instance, flourishes only in the " vleis," or natural depressions in the ground where moisture gathers. Here you may see a patch of bright green, betokening Spring wheat, whilst the whole of the surrounding country is grey under the winter's drought. Besides maize and lucerne, much grown in some districts for the feeding of stock, the experimental farmer of late years has put his land under cane, tobacco, tea and cotton. Tea is grown in Natal, principally, and when mixed with Indian varieties, forms an excellent brew. Both sugar and cotton are profitable. Neither is difficult to grow. They are mainly attempted in Zululand. Though the sugar content is about half that of the cane in the tropics, it answers the purpose, refines well, and is assured of a ready market. Of all the parts of South Africa that I have visited, none has impressed me more than Zululand. In the greenness of its valleys it recalls Ireland, but in the beauty of its mountain scenery it is Switzerland, especially in the early morning, when the mountains, afar off, are the colour of mother-of-pearl, enchanting in their delicacy and soft suggestiveness.

But if agriculture is to prosper in South Africa, a large measure of irrigation must be undertaken. This is particularly true of the Karroo, which is a semi-desert. Only by bringing water to it can it be made to produce food ; and, then, the result is wonderful. On a large estate in the north-western part of the Karroo I found (as I have shown) the most handsome crops growing and yielding a large return. Still more striking is the Sundays River experiment, where a vast area of some 40,000 acres will be brought under cultivation by the erection of a large dam. The land thus irrigated will be sold at £50 an acre and promises to be profitable because of its propinquity to market. The estate is on the railway from Port Elizabeth to Johannesburg and no point is more than seven miles from it. Vegetables, fruit and flowers will be grown upon the plots, as also winter feed for stock.

Then we have Rhodesia which, although not in the Union, is, geographically, South Africa, since the more fruitful part, and the part which has been systematically colonized, lies south of the Zambesi. Here the conditions are very much what they are in the Union : that is to say, there are vast tracts which are arid, and offer very little prospect of remunerative farming, but, at the same time, are good for stock-raising. Happily these areas are covered with a small succulent bush, which provides food for cattle, which manage in some miraculous way to become very sleek. That is the wonder of the whole of South Africa. When I got to South-West Africa I was greatly struck with the hopeless appearance of a great tract of territory. " Surely nothing will grow here ? " I said to my travelling companions. " Wait and see," they replied, in the Asquithian formula, though with better success than the original, for, as we continued on our way to Windhuk, I was agreeably surprised to see the good condition of the cattle in the pens at the railway station awaiting transport by the railways. Stock-raising is, then, the great industry of South Africa at the present time, and it is being greatly developed in the South-West, which, according to some optimist, will become the Argentine of the "Dark Continent." Immense herds now roam the great territory, which has come under the Flag. The growing value of these herds is significant of the increasing importance of South Africa as a cattle-ranching country. Pedigree bulls fetch as much as £5000 at sales, and a prize herd, dispersed at the death of the owner, Mr. Best, a noted British breeder in the Free State, averaged £2000 each.

The rise in the quality of bloodstock during the past few years has been remarkable, and is of the highest promise for the development of South Africa along lines of sound expansion. At the various agricultural shows which are held at all the important centres, there is always a splendid array of animals. I was struck with the quality of the cattle shown at Salisbury, the capital of Southern Rhodesia. This and the high, and, indeed, unique quality of the maize—the Hickory King and Salisbury White, grown mostly in the Mazoe Valley district, a veritable Garden of Eden, about thirty miles from the capital—was a revelation to me. At the Johannesburg show these same exhibits were regarded as establishing the fame of Southern Rhodesia as the premier "maize" country. At Durban, which had its show a little later, I was equally impressed with the quality of the exhibits, particularly of the cattle. They would not have disgraced the finest shows in the English shires.

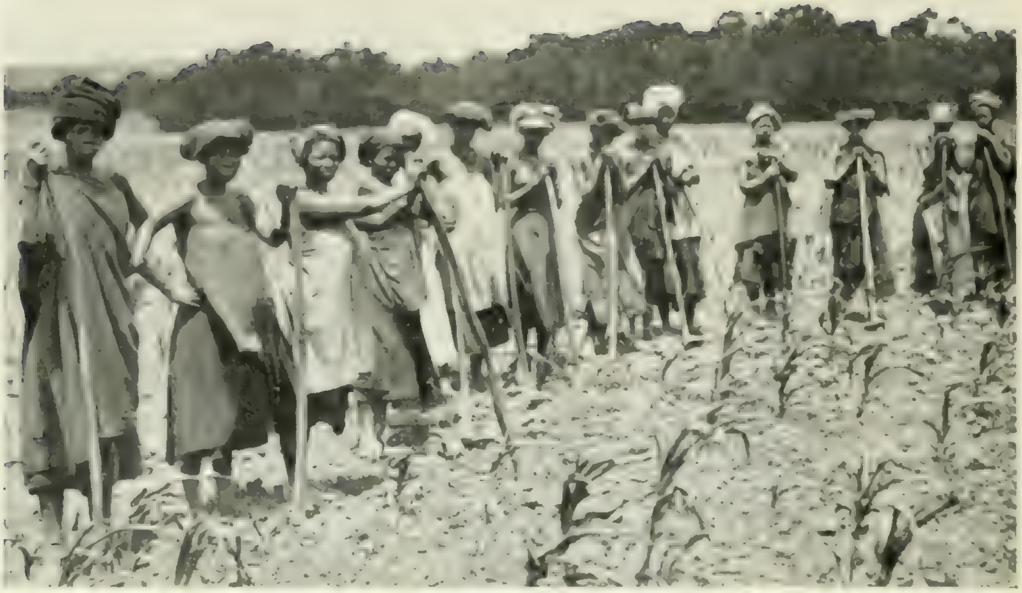
That such strides have been made in comparatively few years is due to the scientific efforts to eradicate stock diseases. Indeed, South Africa obtained unenviable notoriety as a veritable museum of diseases. That they have been so largely kept at bay, and that the quality of the stock has risen in consequence, are the happy results of veterinary activity and research.

Dipping, which has been instituted all over the country, has been of vast assistance in stamping out East Coast Fever and Rinderpest, which formerly devastated the herds of the country and almost destroyed the mobile wealth of the native, who reckons his fortune by the number of his cows, oxen, sheep and goats. Though natives have objected in some parts to compulsory dipping (instituted because of an outbreak of disease) they have accepted it, generally, in a good spirit, and have voluntarily taxed themselves to secure the erection of dipping tanks. Whereas, formerly, it was no uncommon sight to see cattle covered with small pits, the result of " tick bites," now their skin is as soft and as full of sheen as satin. This remarkable change has been brought about by the tanks, which have improved the stock of the country out of all recognition. And a great deal of talent has been enlisted in the service of the farmer and stock breeder. At the head of this division of the Union administration is Sir Arnold Theiler, who has shown the enthusiasm of a true scientist. He is a Swiss by birth, but quite French in his vivacity. His bright eyes go with his lively manner, even if the sturdy, thick-set figure suggests the farmer rather than the savant. Yet he has the pure scientific spirit of a Koch or Pasteur. Early in life, in Switzerland, he lost an arm, which has hindered him not one whit in his activities, though seeming to increase the respectful sympathy by which he is regarded by his students. His efforts to discover the cause of some of the diseases affecting cattle form the epic of veterinary science. To penetrate the secret of Gallamziekte, a certain cattle-disease, he slept with cattle in their kraals so as to follow all the changes in their condition from the moment of infection. He discovered that fly was not the cause of this, but ptomaine poisoning due to the perverted taste of the animal in feeding on putrifying bones, flesh or hides. This unnatural diet is sought when a certain element from the food on the high veld is lacking. Therefore the remedy lies in feeding up the animal.

If the " tick " is the great curse of the cattle of South Africa, water conservation is the great problem affecting agriculture. A defective rainfall is, of course, something hard to combat, but it so happens that many parts of the country, which habitually suffer from drought, are possessed of a sufficient rainfall if only it were properly taken care of. That is the great difficulty. The ground becomes hard as iron and upon this surface the water falls in one of those torrential downpours which are a feature of the South African climate. A large part of this water is lost, for it pours down channels—perhaps old water-courses, which are dry for the greater part of the year, for there are rivers of a single day in South Africa—or into one of the dongas, which has been scored by erosion upon the upper crust of the ground. Little benefit, therefore, is derived from the precious and badly needed moisture.

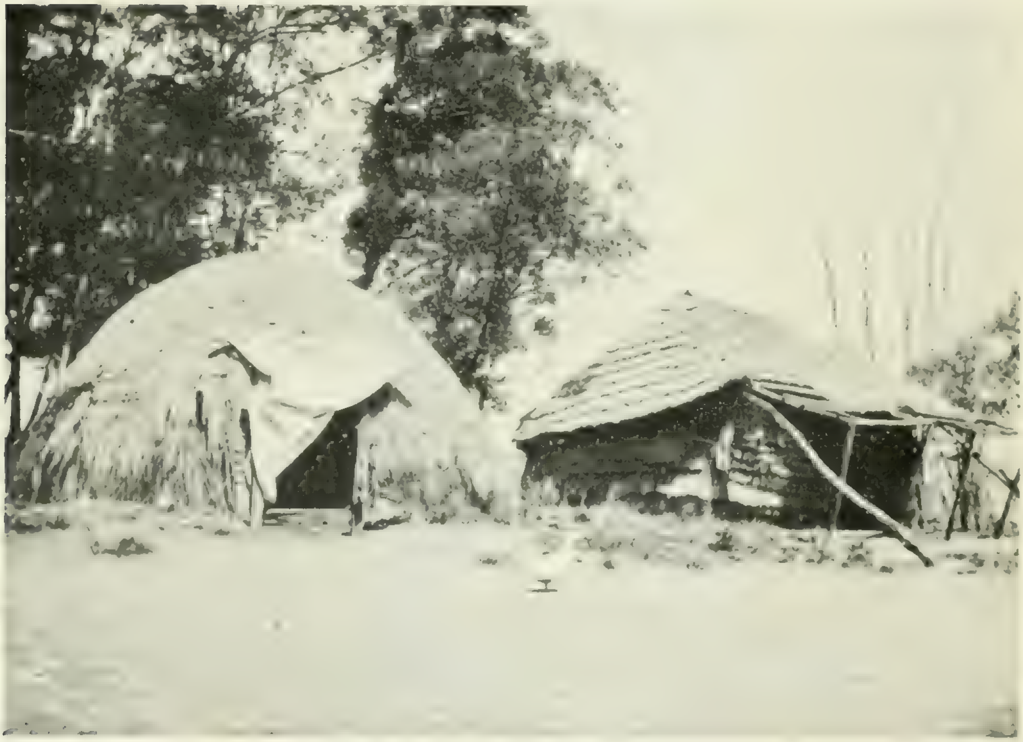
It so happens that the coast-belt of Natal has an annual rainfall of forty inches, which is superior to that on the East Coast of England, or over large parts of Germany. But much of this rushes to the sea in channels age-long or newly made, simply because of the hardness of the ground. Therefore, as I say, the great problem of the country is water conservation. One way to effect this is to plough the land before the annual rains, instead of waiting for them to begin planting. This, however, means ploughing a year ahead, so that when the rain actually falls, the ground is already prepared to receive it and the loosened soil allows the moisture to penetrate. Another wise measure is to harrow after each rain.

In agriculture, as in other occupations, success comes to him who cultivates diligently. The unsuccessful farmer in South Africa, and there are many of him, is he who leaves his farming to his kaffirs, whilst he sits at the local club or idly contemplates nature from his



*S.A.R. Phot.*

NATIVE WOMEN HOEING IN MEALIE FIELD, ALICE DISTRICT, CAPE PROVINCE



SETTLERS' QUARTERS IN ZULULAND

stoep. Such a man is always taken unawares. A bad season undoes him, for his margin of safety, owing to improvidence, has disappeared. He is always running on the edge of things, and is never prepared. Notwithstanding the regular recurrence of drought in South Africa, he is perpetually disturbed by it. Generally, one may reckon that one year in five will be lost to the farmer in South Africa, by want of rain at the critical season. The wise man prepares for this by ploughing in advance and by the careful cultivation of his maize or potato crop, as the case may be. In and out of the planted rows, a kaffir boy, with a single ox attached to a scarifier (or what in Scotland is called a " grubber ") works, perpetually weeding and beginning again when he has completed the round. And thus the crop is kept clean and the soil sweet, so that the rain has every chance of performing its work. Generally speaking, cultivation is the best and only effective remedy, short of irrigation, for an uncertain and spasmodic rainfall. To prepare the soil for the rain is the classic method of dry-farming. But, of course, if there is no looking ahead and no ploughing in advance, then, when the rain comes there will be no profit in it for the farmer, for in a single ploughing he has not been able to get deep enough. The man who is systematic gets down to twenty-one inches at his third ploughing with the aid of a sub-soiler.

A friend, familiar with conditions in the Free State, tells me that one day a farmer offered him his whole crop of maize for the year for fifty pounds. " No, I will not give you fifty for your crop," was the reply, " but I will bet you that fifty that I can find, within a short distance of your farm, a farmer who has a bumper crop." The farmer did not take the bet. Perhaps he realized that one of his neighbours—and a woman to boot, the widow of a farmer—had a magnificent upstanding crop of " mealies " grown on exactly the same sort of soil and in the same atmospheric conditions as the poor failure that represented his own efforts, or rather the want of them, for he had left it all to blacks. And this was the inevitable result. But fortune is fickle for the farmer, and even the best-laid schemes may come to naught through failure of the rain or for other causes. Therefore, the man who starts farming in this country must be prepared to invest capital. He must be provided with fifteen hundred or two thousand pounds. In this way he can resist bad seasons, which sweep away all the fruits of his labours. Should he, on the other hand, come unprovided, then he will be snowed under by the first piece of ill-luck which befalls him. Nevertheless, it is possible for the man who has little else but his good strong arm and his natural skill and pluck to " make good." He acquires experience by working as manager or overseer for another farmer, and thus becomes wise at a considerable saving of money to himself.

Again, it may be possible for the young immigrant to join a working partner—an arrangement which gives him companionship as well as halving the cost of the undertaking. If he divides the profits he also divides the loss, and two together may get capital perhaps more readily, especially if one has been already some years in the country and understands native languages —quite important in their way, for you can never know the kaffir and gain his full respect until you speak his tongue and can rate him roundly in it for his soul's good. To gain knowledge, indeed, of any native speech is time well spent in Africa, for it means so much. If the employer can speak as one native to another, then is his power and scope greatly extended. I can vouch for this in my own discomfort, on occasion, in not speaking the local medium.

The lack of suitable land for close settlement constitutes a real difficulty. By watching the papers you may often discover that a farm is for sale; but you cannot hope to get land otherwise than through the estate market. The farmers, whose holdings are often ridiculously large, and far beyond their farming capabilities, will refuse to sell. They hope for a rise in price. The War, in that it has caused a great shortage in foodstuffs, has added about four million sterling to the value of the farms of the country. But the farmer is not satisfied. He wants more. He refuses, therefore, to sell when the small man comes along and wishes to acquire a few acres for, say, the keeping of poultry and pigs. And thus, though there are immense spaces in South Africa and millions of acres with which little is being done, there are practically no small holdings obtainable by the poor man, who is willing to work them himself. And, again, manual labour is practically debarred him by the fact that this is a "black man's country," and inexorable custom decrees that the black man shall do the lower forms of labour. Where the white has descended low enough in the scale to consent to do "kaffir's work," he has confessed himself a failure. And, probably, that view of him will be confirmed when we get to know the case.

The Labour Party's plan to tax land is partly due to a desire to enforce the cultivation or proper utilization of land. If a large part of his land is unused, the owner will be disinclined to pay taxes on it, and will sell as soon as he can. In Britain, of course, the same principle has been adopted in recent land legislation. But the farmer in South Africa likes to hold his land, either for pure speculation or for prospective ranching, though cultivation is down to the minimum.

Agricultural colleges play a large part in South African life, and owe their first inception to Lord Milner, who had a grasp and administrative wisdom given to few and not unconnected, in his case, with his habit of surrounding himself with thoughtful and progressive young men of talent. The colleges have proved their usefulness beyond dispute, yet to-day their success is not as great as it should be for the reason, amongst others, that the War has inflated prices and brought fortune within the grasp of any producer of food. Thus the earlier one " gets into the game " the quicker one profits. This is the argument of young men who wish to curtail their studies. And yet the college course must still be advisable for the youth who is just entering the country. Thereby is he spared much disappointment and costly experiment, which might have the effect of dulling his enthusiasm as well as depleting his purse, besides adding him to the disgruntled population of the towns.

## XVIII

# PICTURESQUE SOUTH AFRICA

IN the region of the Cape are many beautiful excursions through sun-flecked aisles of oak and silver leaf representing the care and culture of these first settlers, who carried their taste with them into a new world. A house with brown shutters and wide verandah, old oak fittings with a half-door leading into a cool interior where you catch a wondrous vision of treasures of pewter and brass, of deep old chests solidly bound that have I know not what air of mystery, delightful old pottery with its quaint squat figures of a bygone comfortable past—these things we glimpse as our motor takes us past wine-farms. Handsome dwellings, with white-washed gables pure in the perfection of their curves, gleam from the trees. A past age truly of gracious leisure, of lordly pleasure houses designed and filled with taste. The wine-farms, indeed, are places to dream of, where the grapes grow on bushes, not on trained branches as in France and Italy. We are invited in, as is the pleasant custom of these parts, to take a dish of tea in a cool, dark room with the shutters but half opened to the mellowing light of the afternoon. "Come out and eat some figs," counsels our jolly hostess, a most excellent creature, substantial of build and robust of voice. The weaknesses of kaffirs, the vagaries of coloured people, are the subjects of her voluble eloquence. The coloured boys drank and did no work; the kaffirs were eccentric beyond words. In the garden, beneath the laden fig trees, we learned of the depredations of baboons: how they visited the vineyard at the lunch hour when none was there, doing a vast damage out of sheer mischief. They destroyed more than they ate, and forthwith departed to the woods at the sight of approaching man—particularly if armed. A simian sentry posted on high ground always gave the warning. If he did not, then he was executed by the band. Formidable creatures, our forefathers!

Some afternoons were spent in this pleasant way, listening to kindly talk. The Cape Dutch, at all events, have no grudge against us, whatever the experience elsewhere.

On through the undulating country to the Cape of Storms, the southernmost point of the Peninsula, which King John II named Cape of Good Hope to hearten his Portuguese navigators to adventure into unknown seas and lay upon their shores the foundations of an Empire. Victoria Drive has been a thousand times described. It leads round Table Mountain offering a chain of enchanting views. Hout Bay is fascinating for situation. In the old days the inhabitants waved lights so as to deceive the ships, who thought they were entering Table Bay. With the timbers of the vessels they had lured to destruction the frugal wreckers fashioned doors and window-frames, furniture and fittings for their houses. This place of crimes looked innocent enough, however, as I saw it this day of February, the waves curling carelessly into the bay. In leafy lanes beyond, we encountered numerous vehicles crowded with Malay men and women, the latter in bright colours with handkerchiefs covering their heads. It was a festival of their religion, and presently we saw them gathered in a field in preparation, it would seem, for games and exercises of a religious sort, reminding one of a school treat at home, though the gay tones of floating garments struck an unfamiliar and exotic note.

Thereafter we pursued the road leading from Cape Town directly across country in the direction of Fort Elizabeth, of which I knew little save that it was a flourishing centre, famous for boots, had been one of the early settlements founded a hundred years ago (mainly by Wesleyans from England) and that it was named after the wife of the Governor of the day. We were destined to have many an agreeable experience before we arrived at the port. The journey across the continent took us the better part of a week. It was through the most varied scenery—a diversity of hill and plain, forest, river, deep precipitous gorge and mountains, which seemed to play a sort of " will-o'-the-wisp " with us, now distant, now near at hand. Caledon was interesting. It is a hot spring station which people frequent for various ills. It is delightfully situated in a fruitful region ringed with trees, with long views over the undulating landscape. There was Swellendam, too, which interested me as centre of a big agricultural district. Some monster wheat fields were passed, with the stubble still in the ground. Swellendam was the scene of a Dutch Republic in the early days : indeed there were two such institutions for a while, the other being at Graaf-Reinet. They disappeared with the arrival of the British. Nowadays, the farmers hereabouts concentrate on money-making with a result satisfactory to themselves. But the stories of mine host, who was very communicative, did not suggest much enlightenment in this bucolic community. They ate and drank ; they married and begat children ; they attended the " nachtmaal " (or communion service) once a quarter, and entered the town for certain heavy gaieties when they could. But there were few spiritual gleams in their life, save a crude sort of politics and a weekly attendance at church. I realized for the first time that the Church is the great Parliament of the people. If a man does not attend communion, then is he an outcast from the community. He is practically excommunicated, and the social consequences are comparable with those in Mediæval England. The reason why the Dutch cling to their language is largely religious : the feeling that if they lose that they lose their religious entity. " Our people would begin to go to the English Church," observed a predikant to me, as if that were the first step down. And in the villages we went through on this memorable journey I saw something of what this change would mean. The Dutch Reformed Church was always lordly in site and circumstance, wearing that air of sitting upon the town that I have felt in some cathedral cities. The Episcopalian structure was often in corrugated iron, the poor relation of the other.

Equally I was struck with the type of landlord at the hotels at which we stayed. He was no obsequious fellow, washing his hands with invisible soap, but stood beneath his porch, with the air of one saying, " Do you really want to come here ? It is very rash—but, if you insist, of course, we'll do our best." And so you enter, fearing to find the worst. If that is really your expectation, you will be agreeably surprised by the plain comfort and homely welcome within. There is an " ordinary," perhaps, in progress, and you will be expected to join it. You will find your neighbours a good-natured people, not given to outward show, but sincerely set on making you feel at home. The servants will aid that feeling, be they black or coffee-coloured from the Cape, which is the more likely. Both are excellent, if you know how to treat them. The happy manner is a blend of the affable with a sharp eye for delinquencies. A pleasant institution in this country is the bed on the verandah. You wake from your slumbers with a feeling of great freshness. In the larger towns the sleeping-porch is increasingly popular, but curtains must be used to keep away mosquitoes.

On the road we meet the ox-wagon everywhere, with

VIEW OF DURBAN FROM BEREA

DRAKENSBERG, NATAL. MONT AUX SOURCES, N.E. TOWERS the " voor-looper " in front leading the way with a piece of rope attached to the first pair. This post is always held by a youngster, who wears a piece of sacking round his nakedness, tied with a string. He is mostly a friendly little soul who beams upon the passer-by. A negro of larger growth acts as driver and swishes a great whip with extraordinary dexterity. He knows exactly where to hit the great, patient, soft-eyed beasts, who are drawing logs, perhaps, or bags of flour over the eternal grass-lands. This native objurgates his team from time to time, calling each by name. There is always an " Englishman " amongst the sixteen which draw the wagon. The ox so named is, I gather, credited with peculiar wisdom. Each knows its cognomen, and when inspanned after the midday halt comes under the yoke with a more than human obedience. These wagons constitute the main traffic in the roads, and one marvelled at the ease with which the natives manœuvred the beasts to let our motor by. Dutch farmers pass, either driving the " missus " in a Cape cart, or astride their sturdy cobs, generally of Basuto breed. They sit their steeds like Centaurs, man and mount forming one—not like the riders in the Row, whom, I find, excite Colonials to derisive laughter. They are but amateurs, mounted on spiritless hacks, in the sight of the South Africa which lives in the saddle. Keen eyes glance from under the sombrero at sight of the car and its occupants. There is always a salutation for the ladies who are with me. The sweeping hat comes off, and often the rider as well—to open a gate for the car on these immense and interminable estates. Then Mr. Boer will mount gracefully and, with a gesture from the short-handled stock whip with which he rounds up cattle, he disappears, trotting on his long-tailed tit over the edge of the world.

The amazing loneliness of it impresses one—miles without a living soul. At one part we passed through high moorlands covered with tiny bushes which, in the South African spring (our autumn), burst into beauteous flowers. To-day they are somewhat monotonous in their tones of brown and grey, and yet not without a certain attractiveness. Pass! pass! Time flies. We must hasten through the brown levels, along the hedgeless roads over the unending veld. Cattle and sheep in their thousands are there, but the country is so vast that we hardly remark them unless they come upon our path, and we have to slow down because of them. Native cattle are usually small, with big branching horns—as if one were in a deer forest. But they are in good shape, thanks to the "dips."

We have reached stony ground, and now ostriches are seen, running wildly at the sight of our car. One young one gets in front and for half a mile lopes away from us with the most ridiculous stride. In their "panicky" run the ostriches remind one irresistibly of mid-Victorian ladies, equipped with bustle, escaping from a too-gay Lothario! We spend the night at Mossel Bay, where the chauffeur seats himself a few yards from us in the dining-room. It is the salutary rule in South Africa that all white travellers are on a footing of equality.

Then the glorious region of the Knysna. It began at George, a delicious little town embowered in trees. Thenceforward, we descend into tremendous gorges, winding down and down round the mountains by a road, which had been carved out by patient convict labour. Winding round these narrow and yet perfect roads is a strain upon the driver and, occasionally, at blind corners, a quick reaction is needed to save us from collision. Down, down, until the bottom, and we have lunch on the greensward neighbouring a sweet-sounding brook. "This is Scotland," said our chauffeur, who hailed from those parts. The description was a little inadequate, but that was excusable in a Scot. And,

THE HEADS, KNYSNA

as we ran along the bottom of the great gorge, we scented the mystery and coolness of a primæval forest: gigantic trees of yellow wood, a hundred feet high, hung with ropes of fibre, the natural stairway of the monkeys. Near by, at Addo Bush, is a small herd of elephants. They were being hunted a few weeks later and reduced in numbers because of the mischief they do to surrounding farmers. Alas! the elephant in South Africa will soon be as extinct as the Dodo. Thereafter, we come to Knysna, of no great account in itself, but gloriously situated with rocky "heads" guarding jealously the narrow entrance to the Bay, their rugged masses contrasting with the opalescent effects of the calm waters. I thought of the panorama of the Alps at Pau in Southern France as there came more fully into view a majestic range of mountains, of snow-capped towers, filmy and unsubstantial in their evening shapes, dominating the wide valley and investing it with melancholy and the magic of suggestion. The soft and whispered sibilants of unutterable experience seemed to belong to Keurbooms River, which flows at the mountain's foot. We stayed a night overlooking the beauteous stream, drinking in the fascination of the scene. That night I felt the haunting presence of an African night. What was that in the grass there? Did a panther move? What was that eerie scream, that bird—surely of evil omen—flapping its heavy wings up against the moon? . . . On, again, in the early morning, our spirits reviving to the sights and sounds of woodland. Strange-looking white men, the weirdest I have seen, glanced out of rough-made cabins as we motored by. "Poor whites," said laconically the chauffeur, and everything was clear. Their eyes spoke of solitude; their beards were ragged as their clothes, their glance and manner furtive and afraid. Surely, they were the last step before the backward plunge into the dim ancestry of our evolution! A delightful valley up which we crept was watered by a stream. A stalwart and cheerful figure, whistling merrily, washed his car in the brook. Something made us stay a while and we got a cordial invitation to morning tea—that universal custom in South Africa—served under great branching trees and in the sylvan sweetness of a glade. Host introduced hostess, and we were soon chatting as if we had known each other long. That is the South African way. And now to Port Elizabeth, trim and prosperous-looking, where a train rumbles me to Pretoria. Good-bye, Knysna, region of enchantment, destined one day, surely, to be a world's playing-ground.

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To describe Victoria Falls is, frankly, an impossibility. To me it represents sublimities of the spirit, a sense of inner majesty and significance as well as of outward sound and fury which I find beyond my powers to convey. When I saw it first, after a long journey from Buluwayo, I was disappointed. " This beats Niagara," an American is said to have cabled to his friend. Certainly, the first view did not suggest that. There was not the same great wall of water, the same suffocating challenge to all one's adjectives. No, it was beautiful; it was grandiose; but Niagara? Never! Yet I revised my view before the day was out. That American was right; it did " lick " Niagara—no doubt about it, now. At the Anglo-American Falls you have a tremendous, over-powering sensation, a view such as this old earth has not presented twice since creation. But Victoria is a series of pictures of surpassing grandeur which, if taken together, do certainly present a spectacle unrivalled in the world. Nowhere such masses of water falling over stupendous cliffs—not one single mass, mark you, but a glittering gallery of the most perfect glory: water foaming into gorges of terrifying depth and splendour. The purest thing in the world is the soft, iridescent beauty of the lunar rainbow. Shall I ever forget it? There is something so ethereal in it, something that speaks to the soul, that suggests deep, psychic meanings. God put a bow in the sky to announce for ever the fulfilling of His promise; for what divine purpose has He placed this rainbow, fashioned out of moonbeams, caught and imprisoned in the pellucid water, against the black, basaltic rock? There is fresh, untrammelled beauty, surprising and intoxicating effects in each detail of this lovely spot, each facet of a transcendent gem flashing its beams in the radiant sun, to the utter subjugation of the senses. Incomparable sight! I walk within the magic "rain forest"—stretch of eternal verdure on the edge of the mighty pool. I am drenched with the mist of waters. The spray is always leaping and falling in the air, and the air is for ever pulsating to a perpetual rainbow. This is, indeed, rainbow land. Now I know where the rainbow ends—in a vast chasm in these Falls. By leaning perilously over the edge and looking dizzily into depths, one can see this amazing rainbow starting into being. Rainbow island, reached by a short paddle from this spot, is where Livingstone stood when the full, incredible beauty of the Falls was revealed to him. Blessed above ordinary men he who should first gaze upon the sublimities of this cloud of falling water.

There was much water in the Zambesi. A few days before a canoe, such as the Barotse boys were now driving with sinewy black arms through a stretch of eddying whirlpool, had been crunched up by a hippopotamus. Supposing such was to be our fate! My companion, a battle-scarred hero, and myself exchanged glances as we figured on possibilities. "Look!" said the Major, touching my arm, "at the 'croc' asleep on that tree!" Nevertheless, the journey was safely accomplished, and we stood upon the spongy ground where Livingstone had stood gazing with rapturous and adoring face at this new manifestation of the divine power and mystery. That afternoon we visited Khandahar Island (named after Lord Roberts) in a motor launch. On the way, the sight of hippopotami spouting water thrilled us, more especially as we knew the story of the near escape of the launch thirty-six hours before. It was attacked by a river-horse. The animal had bitten a hole, nine inches by four, below the gunwale. Just in time the passengers were landed. To-day the skipper kept a steely eye on the river, now and again looking lovingly at his service rifle, which lay at hand. . . . Next evening I dined off hippo heart—quite palatable—for the first time. The rifle had spoken, and a young hippo had lain stretched on the grass. It had come ashore for its evening's cumbrous saunter. And it requires a marksman, I do assure you, to hit the real bull's eye—practically the only vulnerable spot in his pachydermatous bulk.

Now a trolly train passes over the bridge which traverses the great main gorge of the Falls. That bridge is higher, I believe, than the cross of St. Paul's. I was looking down into the tremendous depths when the bridge swayed to the movement of the trolly; I began to think of an ocean swell! Just at this moment a Nimrod passed with a smoking gun, reminding me of the story of a panther killed here on the bridge. The sight was supposed to be so terrifying to the ladies in the hotel that the late audacious dweller of the bush was covered with a shroud as if to give him Christian burial. The owner of a fine tiger in a cage just by the station tells of his escape from a lion. He was proceeding, on his motor cycle, to his farm a mile or two beyond the Falls, when a lion, swishing a very angry tail, barred the narrow path cut in the Bush. " Que faire ? " No time to turn, no time to stop. Almost more quickly than thought itself, the cyclist opened the throttle. The machine gave a jump ; so did he—likewise the lion.

He pressed on; so did the lion—but in the opposite direction.

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At the farther end of Rhodesia are the Zimbabwe Ruins, those fabled vestiges of a highly gifted people who piled stone upon stone, without mortar, in clever constructions admirably designed for keeping out an enemy. Who were they, whence came they, whither have they gone? These questions perplex the mind as one gazes at these extraordinary signs of an advanced race, learned in military defence, in the art of mining, in knowledge of the eternal mysteries—as witness the wonder of their temple. Enchanted days I spent there feasting my eyes on these strange ruins of a people who have gone forth into the night leaving no trace. The Temple seems to have belonged to the Egyptian cult, and is immense in area with still perfect outer walls twenty-seven feet in height, and edged with the chevron pattern.

The Acropolis, on a steeply ascending hill, is a citadel intended, evidently, to guard those who mined for gold. Its narrow, twisting entrances point to a deep and crafty knowledge of defence, a cunning perception of devices for keeping an enemy at bay. And for gold they sought. Thus has arisen the wondrous legend that this is the Ophir whence came the precious substance for the Temple of Solomon. Ah! baffling mystery!

# XIX

# "YESTERDAY, TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW"

IN Natal, a flowering shrub known popularly as "Yesterday, To-day and To-morrow" is one of the features of the landscape. The three days of the title represent the life of the flowers. The first day they are deep violet, the second a lighter mauve, and the third white. In the glimmering of a South African night, under the myriad stars which are more radiant in this hemisphere than in ours, the white-starred bush stands out with peculiar distinctness. It symbolizes life. Youth begins by being royal and purple in its proud pretension; then maturity comes with sober hues and the tender meanings of mauve and, finally, fades into the white of age, as if life held no more illusions, and there were nothing in it but a stark and staring realism. Perhaps the odour of a sweet remembrance may encompass it, the perfume of perfervid past may hang about its petals; but the rush and riot of youth have departed.

That flowering Francisia is typical of a nation's life because out of its pride of strength and rough beginnings must come the servitudes and disabilities of age. The white, staring period is not yet upon South Africa, which has scarcely passed its boyhood. Yet upon its features are the marks of manhood and sometimes a disquieting sign foretelling of decrepitude. A somewhat tumultuous yesterday has already passed—the age when the blood runs warm and richly, when there was impatience at restraints and a hot desire to grab at all the big things of the earth. Sobriety has come; South Africa has settled down, almost too readily, to the rôle of the little old man content with a plain and humdrum existence: the *petit rentier* spirit.

But South Africa is not debilitated. It has not become senile; yet there is a narrowness of spirit and an unprogressiveness which are extraordinary in a country still in the stages of first development. There is room here for millions—millions from starving, crowded Europe; millions that would be put upon their feet again and would breathe the breath of life from these wide, open plains. But it is not to be—because of politics—an old man's game as played in South Africa: cramping and stupid in its restrictions, with an outlook as broad as a postage stamp. Veritably, the door is closed and barred by the spirit of reaction, of exclusiveness, of timidity. The Dutch farmer, who is still dominant in the country, will not admit the immigrant. If he did, there would be an end of himself and his own power, and he sees that. No longer a handful of people could bottle up a vast territory.

It is not that one does not have a certain sympathy with the Boer; indeed, I have a great deal—yet I cannot close my eyes to the devastating effect of his conservatism. The land calls for population, as it calls for water, and the population would bring the water by means of irrigation, which requires capital and co-operation and concentration of effort. I am struck with the vast emptiness of South Africa in my travels through the country. Everywhere are great unpeopled spaces: hundreds of miles without a soul and only the cry of the raven. If this is true of the vast domains of the Union, it is also true of South-West Africa and true, emphatically, of Rhodesia. Here the rich, red soil that holds out a prospect of new life and of fortune to the adventurous is peopled so sparsely that but forty thousand, the population of a fifth-rate English town, is spread over an area as great as France and Germany combined. It is an amazing fact which strikes every beholder. And yet there are certain objections to letting in the million from Europe and turning it loose upon these great dusty plains. Capital is wanted; that is the rub. Slum-dwellers would perish in these incredible solitudes. They must be nurtured in the early stages of their colonization. Even if they were experts in the tilling of the soil, which of course the majority would not be, they would not be able to subsist without extraneous aid. And that aid, in the Union, at all events, is not forthcoming because of politics.

There is no developed scheme for sending the European to South Africa and helping him on his arrival there. The Dutch oppose it, and General Smuts, even strong in his recent successes at the election, dare not so impinge upon their racial prejudice that they would cry: "Here is a traitor to our cause, a man who would plant the country with Britishers and deprive us of our power." At the back of these arguments is the conviction that we, the British nation, are not blameless in our past relations. We have sinned in our dealings with the Boers, and it is human nature to take advantage of it. There is the Raid, and there is a series of events showing that we have not been altogether happy in our efforts to rule the country.

I hinted that the middle stage had been reached in the existence of South Africa, that the golden age had passed. Rhodes is no more. There are no buccaneers rustling their way to fame and romantic fortune. The brave days of Kimberley, of the diamond rush, the days when gold was discovered on the Rand, when the goldfields were staked out in a multitude of claims, each jostling the other and hindering each other's development, are gone, never to return. Those heroic times are succeeded by an age of sober industrial concerns, worth many millions, in which each miner is a mere cog in the machine, a person of no consequence, having no personal spur in the acquisition of a fortune. His every action is regulated with the minuteness of a clock. Gone is this fierce and strenuous fight for personal wealth, which characterized the old brave days of mining. Johannesburg sprang out of such surroundings, child of a hard and strenuous school. The miner in those days stumbled upon a fortune as Sir Thomas Cullinan (as he now is) stumbled upon his diamond. But those things no longer happen in this regularized age.

None the less, life is not prosaic. There is still risk, and there is still adventure. The risk belongs to the future of the native. Will he, collectively, assert his right to a place in the sun ? These pages will have told you something of his temper, of his frame of mind. He has risen in revolt in the past. The last echoes of the Zulu rising, in which thousands were killed, still reverberate through Natal. There were the fights with natives in the days of the early settler, of the Great Trek ; fights with the Matabele in Rhodesia in recent times. Are these days past ? Of a truth science has given new force to armaments rendering the most warlike savage harmless as a child. Yet is knowledge, destructive as well as constructive, on the march. May be that knowledge will be found in the half-caste who would be formidable as leader of the blacks. He has in some degree the intelligence of his white father, if not the character of the race. Assuredly the *état d'âme* of our subject peoples is menacing to our " superiority." How far it threatens us depends on various things, not the least being our ability to maintain our own level. If, obviously we sink to his, how can we expect the old reverence, the old willingness to serve ? But in the heart of the rose is the canker of social and economic conditions. As in China, as in Egypt, and India, and in Ireland, the intelligentsia surges against secular subjection.

It will live its life, it will have its chance in the world, it will try its hand at ruling the masses, irrespective of the fact that it has had no experience, and that it is leagues apart from that mass. But the leaven must work its will, its tempestuous course through the bread that has " risen " to new circumstances.

That is one of the problems I have tried to deal with with all the gravity that I can command. For I recognize the seriousness of it—its primordial character in the fortunes of South Africa. The other problem is also a sum in assumptions, a problem in race dominance : I mean the fight between Dutch and British. How will it end ? I try to show the tendencies. There is Smuts to lead the host into the Promised Land of racial accommodations. He has all the fire and all the purpose of a Moses fixing his eyes on the land of milk and honey, leading his brethren through the sterile waste of political dissensions to the higher ground of constructive statesmanship and inter-racial understanding. Prince Arthur of Connaught presides over the edifice. He is a symbol of unity, of that great new Imperial doctrine of General Smuts which says : " The Empire can only exist on the goodwill of its constituent sister nations bound together by the golden thread of the British sovereignty." That is the happy formula which is going to solve some of the difficulties that we feel about the Empire, which, obviously, cannot be held together by any ancient shibboleth of " sun and satellite," but must respond to the new and inspiring vision of a mother flanked by strong and beauteous daughters, each mistress in her own home. It is an idea that is both safe and sane, that accords with the spirit of independence and democracy, that cuts a new path to the Temple of Goodwill and of British power and achievement in the world.

There is now the appearance of a firm alliance between the Unionists and General Smuts, and in following such

THE AUTHOR

MRS. CHARLES DAWBARN

a design the old British Party, enshrining the Rhodes' tradition, has shown the soundest wisdom. It was obvious that isolated action would no longer result in constitutional good, more especially since, as I have said elsewhere, the members of the Party follow no set policy. Under the guidance of General Smuts they have become bone of the bone and flesh of the flesh of the South African organism, though they object to the word "absorption." Since they were "invited" to join the S.A.P., it was theirs, also, to share the responsibility of power. According to their numbers and influence, they received seats in the Cabinet. It was also apparent that their presence has produced some modifications, in a liberal and progressive sense, in the S.A.P. programme. This is all to the good for the contentment of British sentiment in South Africa, which was feeling aggrieved at a series of real or imagined slights.

Nationalism is almost Bolshevic in its disruptive force because it drives a wedge between the two leading elements of the South African nation : the British and the Dutch. "Whom God hath joined, let no man put asunder," solemnly declared the veteran Parliamentarian, John X. Merriman, at the opening, in 1920, of his electoral campaign. Smuts' plan to mobilize "les bonnes volontés" is the most interesting that has yet been formulated since Botha inaugurated his policy of conciliation, founded on the good faith of two peoples. This is the only sound method of government in South Africa. All others have failed. The cruder method of Dutch dominance on the back of British capital and enterprise, as invented by Paul Kruger, failed ; the Rhodes regime equally failed with its sanction of violence culminating in the fiasco of the Raid. And now the middle course of dealing fairly with two peoples of kindred origin and religion appeals as eminently practical and likely to achieve results.

Whatever we may conclude as to the relative chances of the two parties in the field—the Separatists and those who cling to Empire—the fact remains that the Dominion of South Africa enjoys complete liberty in the management of her foreign and domestic affairs which, until yesterday in Imperial diplomacy, was held to be incompatible with the existence of the Empire. South Africa has attained full stature, and would exercise no doubt sovereign rights in treaty-making on her own account, and in conducting diplomatic business, if it were not for the expenditure that would devolve upon so young a community. Smuts has made much in speeches at the polls of the enhanced status of South Africa, due to the War and her part in it, and has claimed full Imperial recognition of those services. South Africa must be consulted on all matters affecting her interests. This phase of irregular or semi-independence is not without its inconvenience, which has struck American observers.

Perhaps it is not unnatural that Hertzog, in the circumstances, clamours for complete separation. "You have established virtual independence, with a few irritating limitations; why not give the position a dignity and a name?" That is the substance of the Nationalists' argument.

Like all pastoral peoples, the Boers are peculiarly susceptible to an appeal to their past. It is easy to stir them through sentiment to a sense of loss or injustice by invoking the days when their Presidents went amongst them in their tall hats and stiff black garb in the simplicity of a patriarchal system. Parade and ceremony are obnoxious to them and suggest subjection. Not unnaturally they prefer their own way, caring naught for European opinion—without a thought of progress or the other vexatious signs of dependence upon an outside Power. By force of circumstances, as the sport of their own tumultuous history—almost without realizing it—they have entered upon engagements, which render impossible a return to the old life. They cannot disregard these obligations, under peril—so they are told, to their infinite and naïve astonishment—of Civil War! The English have come into their country and cannot be ejected or disregarded. They insist upon their own notions of government and of good faith; they adhere to their time-honoured flag. The position is incredible—preposterous to those old Boers who regard the British, in spite of everything, as interlopers.

Evidently, this frame of mind does not fit in with the inexorable conditions of South Africa in the twenty-first century. That is the tragedy of it. The old Boer cannot adapt himself to new circumstances; yet he must conform or disappear. There seems no other way out of it unless we are to assume the success, at some near date, of the Republican Party. The backvelders' ideals are not the ideals of to-day, and go not with crowded cities, with mines devouring lives and labour, with the lust of gold or with natives insistent upon education, and, worse than that, with pretensions of equality with the whites! The old Boer likes not to see the smoke from his neighbour's chimney. He wants solitude, to be left alone with his God and his customs. His political action to-day is largely a protest, however vain and pathetic, against the thing we call progress. He will have none of it, especially as regards the black races. "Call them equal!" he roars, pointing to his kaffirs. He cannot understand such infirmity of mind. This is not the spirit of Exeter Hall or yet of the scientific seeker after truth; but it is the natural posture of a man limited and blinded by defective education, who lives in daily contact with an inferior and, as he believes, an inherently inferior order of being. Racial inferiority is the comfortable theory of the "top-dog." It gives sanction to servitude and to the master's mandate. But is there scientific warrant for it? Given "White" opportunities, can "Colour" attain to capacity?

In his Native Affairs Act, Smuts sets up machinery, both representative and consultative, for the native races. He has realized that something must be done, and done quickly, to satisfy the inferior brother. "To govern is to foresee," according to the French adage. Smuts has the foresight of the statesman and a Parliamentary technique so admirably adapted to its end that it furnished in 1920 a list of measures which would make the fortune of any Prime Minister, and, wonderful to relate, it was done with a Parliamentary Minority! Somehow or other, this super-pilot managed to screw speed out of the Parliamentary boat when all the world believed it to be water-logged.

It remains to be seen whether the combined forces of the South African Party and the Unionists will not provoke some new and unexpected activity on the part of the Nationalists who may, by cunning blandishments, induce Labour—or what is left of it after General Smuts' success in 1921—to join them. This, of course, may lead to complications, but the one thing certain is that unsettled conditions are inimical to the best interests of the country. Yet in spite of wild throbbings of the political pulse, no country (with the possible exception of the United States) has known such prosperity. Some effects of the world-wide slump are felt, for no corner of the civilized earth is exempt from them, yet nowhere has the business man been less harassed by abnormal conditions. Labour is cheap and plentiful, the cost of living below the European scale, taxation far less than in European countries and, generally, life is larger and easier for the white man than it is Overseas. Farmers get more for their produce than ever before and pay no more in wages. The day of the manufacturer has dawned. New industries are springing up, especially in areas served by railways and close to coal and other raw materials. None the less, many of these promising enterprises await in vain the oncoming of capital. But capital is shy and unwilling to embark in all the tempting propositions that emerge from the plentiful supply of coal and cotton, of hides and tanning, of wool, or iron ore, of sugar-cane and forests of fruit trees—shy because one never knows what the political weather will be to-morrow. Will the sun shine, or shall we have a hurricane? Africa is the country of the unexpected. Yet, I say, in spite of all this, prosperity has come to the farmer and producer, to the nascent manufactories, to the shopkeeper, to the dealer in "kaffir truck" and, indeed, to all categories of citizens who have put their energies into business enterprise.

The War has dealt favourably with the land. It has escaped the exhaustion of great efforts against a mammoth enemy equipped with vast man-power and munitions; only afar off and seen dimly is the spectre of Bolshevism. Revolution takes no root in Afric's soil. I have shown that even the Republic is mere reaction founded on a sentimental misconception. The something new which the continent provides, according to the Latin "tag," is new in a creative and constructive sense. That the greatest benefits will flow from a strong government cannot be doubted. Nor should the strength of the Secessionist movement be underrated. It is threatening without question. May be it grows stronger—I do not know. Should it triumph, the future is fraught with uncertainties. The Nationalists have given no proof of competence. On public form they show a disquieting lack of it. Perhaps their worst punishment would be to put them in office for a year and see what they made of it. Ignorance of affairs and reactionary sentiments are not a winning combination. Yet if Imperial enthusiasts are counting on conversion as the result of a Royal occupant of Government House, I think they may be disappointed. Nevertheless, with his satisfying majority, General Smuts should be able to carry out many wise reforms.

Very interesting are the problems that face the Prince and Premier. Remedies for racial jealousies and obstacles to progress lie in immigration, which would bring preponderating influence on the side of Britain. Naturally, the Dutch oppose; they are not willing to commit suicide; yet the presence of the Prince may bring a large influx of his countrymen. The clamant need of the sub-continent is population. Its waste places cry aloud for settlement. But a general air of quiet and prosperity can alone produce money from financial pockets. These are likely to flow from this Royal regime. And the Dutch, having the politeness of simple folk, are certain to accept graciously the Princely Governorship, even if it symbolizes something to which they will not subscribe. But now something has happened which may alter their chances. For the first time since Union, there is a "British" or, at least, representatively racial government at Cape Town. It is in the true sense a Coalition. Before that, men from the North, i.e. from the old Boer republics, seemed to have the preponderating voice. The significance of the change is not lost on such a British community as Rhodesia waiting on the threshold of a new constitutional existence. For the first time a large section is disposed to join hands with the Union, though the Rhodesian Committee's proposals are not in that direction. During his year's experiment (practically the period covered by this book) General Smuts sat in the midst of conflicting tendencies, but somehow contrived to direct them in the way of Parliamentary progress. But his methods have changed with the new conditions. He no longer "dies daily," as St. Paul said, or escapes as by a miracle. Englishmen hold portfolios, and the

Government majority is cemented by British votes. This result is bound to affect the back-veld and its policy. It will feel the cool shades of opposition. Its representatives will be no longer powerful. It will have to moderate its ancient prejudices and, eschewing racialism, try the more hopeful paths of co-operation. It will be a new lesson in political suavities which will not be lost on the Boer who, in spite of his efforts after fixity, is yet moving. He is sensible enough to see that there is nothing to be gained by remaining behind. Moreover, he has begun to glimpse the intentions of Smuts (if there were funds at present available for these purposes) to bring him in to schemes of agricultural improvement and development. The old recalcitrant Boer is dying—he who grumbles that the menus of the corridor trains are not in Dutch instead of English, and that tea is served of an afternoon instead of coffee, the good backvelder's drink. And when he hears English spoken more often than not in the Parliamentary tribune, he will take warning, and, perhaps, grudgingly admit that he himself knows something of the tongue of Shakespeare. I am writing of the morrow, but it will come as surely as the sun at dawn to turn the shimmering veld into the Field of the Cloth of Gold. Meanwhile, before that to-morrow comes, there is much to do in the way of peace and comprehension, both on this side and that and perhaps a need, on the part of England, of an understanding of the peculiar problems of South Africa. Nor should we, as those who adventure fearfully into the night, dread changes in constitutional practice which would bring a South African, born and bred, into the Governor's chair. Did not South Africa serve us during the War with state wisdom, in the persons of Smuts and Botha, as with the valour of her sons? Thus precedents are born without hurt to Empire because founded on the natural development and rise in nationhood of a people. There is no disloyalty in growing up. There may be profound unwisdom in not recognizing the fact of it.

Prince Arthur, then, represents the political union of kindred peoples settled in an overwhelmingly black country. His fine capacity to learn and to appreciate the nice problems of his charge are the happiest auguries for his success. None the less, his very appointment marks a tendency which is new and, at first sight, a little alarming. His Royal Highness, given his traditions, will follow the rule of a constitutional monarch in his aloofness from political controversy. He will not thrust a weight into this scale or that, but maintain a royal—and rigid—impartiality. The old notion of a Governor with Parliamentary and even Cabinet experience at home, at the constant disposition of the Premier, has been changed into something quite different. Even the faculty of postponing signature to consult with Downing Street, which belongs to Governors-General, no longer holds, we must suppose, with the old force. The effect, therefore, is to place a greater burden of responsibility upon the shoulders of the Premier. The Colony, in all its own affairs, is dominant and self-sufficing, and its chief Minister is the instrument of negotiation in any matter calling for the adjustment of Imperial interests—an important difference from the past.

A Prince of the blood royal is above politics and an *Imperial* figure, whereas a statesman, however distinguished, is a symbol of the party system and essentially British. To send a member of the royal house to South Africa was a strong card to play and involved the risk of failure. But amongst a people so naturally courteous as the Dutch and given the tact of the royal emissary, his success was assured. He was bound to heal animosities and complete the work of reconciliation which General Smuts had begun. He unites the divergent parts of Union under a broad banner of toleration.

It may be that his personality and the principle of "Imperial kingship" for which he stands, may lead to the extinction of racialism which the most rabid elements have done their best to keep alive and have succeeded beyond all expectation.

Yet revulsion comes sooner or later. Such tactics fail when the victims see through the game. Besides, even the least informed can scarcely believe that South Africa could return to the days of Steyn and Paul Kruger. Much water has flowed beneath the bridges since then—aye, and much blood, too. Some of the blood was for Empire. Thousands of Dutch fought side by side with us in the war. That has changed things. We must not forget it.

As the present situation has largely evolved from the personal element in politics and its attendant jealousies, the balm may be reasonably applied by the tact and charm of two members of the Royal House. Nor can we neglect the fact that the presence of the Prince at Government House means the strengthening of British influence in South Africa. British capital will flow to assist local industries, and bring, no doubt, a considerable addition to the British population. That means the burning out of racialism.

Finally, the effect of this brilliant appointment upon the native has to be considered. With him the name of Queen Victoria has retained all its old magic. The fact that her grandson is to inaugurate a new era in native policy, whereby natives will be dowered with political institutions, is of great significance and points to a beneficial change in the status of the black man.

What, then, of the future ? Is it well with this child of Empire ? Well, indeed, if events follow a normal and unsensational course ; but we are warned there is no fool like a political prophet. None the less we know that General Smuts is favourable to schemes of irrigation so as to increase, indefinitely, the food resources of the country. In recent speeches he has declared his desire to encourage the right sort of immigration. Thus there are hopes for South African expansion beyond the ordinary. But certain obstacles stand in the way: the one is the general lack of money to invest in colonial enterprise; the other lies in the unsleeping suspicion of the Dutch, which prevents suitable inducements being offered to the millions in Europe anxious to "make good" abroad. Perhaps the generous initiative of General Smuts, aided by the solid support of the British party, will overcome this difficulty and open the gates to a stream of immigrants. In this lies the hope of South Africa.

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